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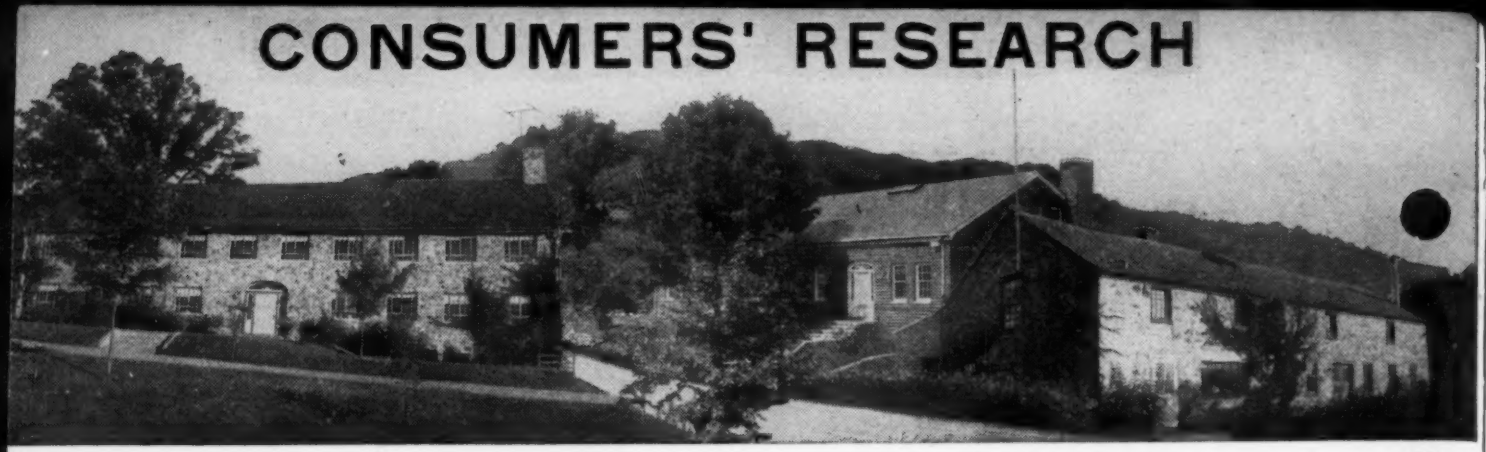
CONSUMERS' RESEARCH



Vol. 18 • No. 6 **BULLETIN** December 1946

Off the Editor's Chest

THE abrupt and sudden decision of the government on October 14, 1946, to remove meat and meat products from price control represents a great triumph for consumers. It demonstrates beyond question that what consumers in large numbers make clear they want badly enough they will get, and they can bring this about without the need of setting up formal organizations or "pressure groups," picketing, or hiring Washington lobbyists. After trying to live on eggs, cheese, fish, and poultry as substitutes for customary red meat for a few weeks, the American consumer got fighting mad; thereafter things began to happen.

The decontrol of meat and other products, which accomplished the result of once more restoring scarce items to store shelves was a severe defeat for the exponents of government planning, whose philosophy is perhaps best summed up in the words of the English professor of International Politics, Edward Hallet Carr, that "The first essential of economic reconstruction is that planned consumption must precede and condition planned production." In one chapter of his book, "Conditions of Peace," Professor Carr takes notice of the fact that "the capriciousness of consumers' demand is one of the problems of the modern social and economic system." He reaches the conclusion that in the early stages of a planned society "some restriction of consumers' choice is probably inevitable." Under this system, as John Chamberlain pointed out in reviewing the book for the New York Times: "the consumer, as is apparent, takes what he gets and likes it or goes to a concentration camp for a breach of 'self discipline'. In short, Professor Carr is merely paraphrasing the old joke about 'comes the revolution and you'll eat strawberries [and cream and like it]'. Even if strawberries give you the hives."

It is a little difficult for the average American consumer to take seriously such ideas about controlling consumer choices. Few Americans have been aware that many such controls and restraints were an actual part of the planning ideas being worked over by government economists and sociologists, who love to formulate orders and disciplines for other people. Except for the past war years, the American consumer has had such an infinite variety and multiplicity of attractive and efficient products from which to choose that he is unable to contemplate any other possibility than a return, delayed, perhaps, but nevertheless certain, to what governmental and professional planners are wont to refer to sneeringly as pre-war "normalcy." As CR has pointed out from time to time, however, there have been innumerable instances where under the guise of wartime controls attempts have been made to redirect consumers' buying and eating habits by deliberately depriving them of some desired commodity or forcing a substitute upon them. The most notable example was butter, production of which was discouraged by the setting of unfavorable price ceilings, for the avowed reason that the government desired to curtail consumption of butter and increase production of condensed and whole milk, on the ground that a change would be better for consumers.

(Continued on page 22)

Scientific and Technical Experts and Editors: F. J. Schlink, R. Joyce, M. C. Phillips, Helen P. Alleman, A. R. Greenleaf, and Charles L. Bernier. Editorial Assistants: Mary F. Roberts and B. Beam.

Symbols used to indicate sources of data and bases of ratings: A—recommended on basis of quality; AA—regarded as worthy of highest recommendation; B—intermediate with respect to quality; C—not recommended on basis of quality; cr—information from Consumers' Research's own tests or investigations; 1, 2, 3—relative prices, 1 being low, 3 high. Note that price and quality are completely differentiated in CR's listings; **a quality judgment is independent of price**; 45, 46—year in which test was made or information obtained or organized by the staff of Consumers' Research.

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¶*CR will, of course, gladly change addresses for men and women in the services as often as required by changes in station and other circumstances.*

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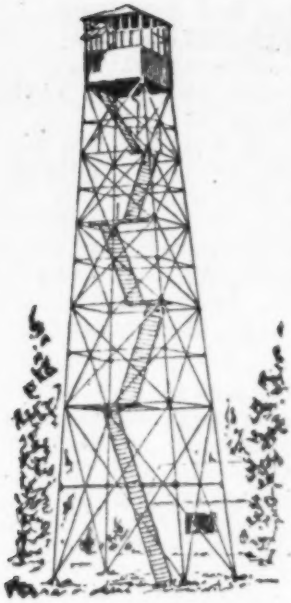


The Consumers' Observation Post

SOAP is made so efficiently and cheaply by the mass-production factory process that it is very uneconomic to attempt to make it at home, yet that is the only way the average homemaker can be sure of getting any at the present time. The chief factors in causing the shortage, according to The Wall Street Journal, are the drying up of the meat supply during the period when the OPA controls were put back on meat, the shortage of coconut oil, and the shortage of soda ash due to strikes at two of the largest plants last June. Since the average bar of soap is 50 to 70 percent tallow, which, like steaks, comes from steers, the meat famine in September and October cut down on one of the most essential soap ingredients. One of the trade journals also points out that the OPA had refused to handle the industry's request for higher prices on an industry wide basis and that in many cases soap makers were allowed a ceiling price which on certain products just covered their cost of production. Naturally when an item does not produce a profit, a manufacturer discontinues making it, and uses his equipment to make other items.

* * *

SODIUM BICARBONATE (baking soda) is an excellent underarm deodorant. This fact has now been demonstrated by clinical studies made on 90 persons. Back in 1937, CR listed this inexpensive deodorant, recommending the use of one tablespoonful of bicarbonate of soda to a glass of water for the purpose.

* * *

PACKARD'S Dealer Advisory Council has made a valiant effort to stamp out black market practices in selling automobiles, which have plagued prospective purchasers and put the trade in general in a bad light. The Council has drawn up a code of ethics, which it urges should be posted in every Packard showroom throughout the country, recommending that a customer trade in his old car on the purchase of a new one, that orders be filled in the sequence in which they are placed except where they are urgently needed by doctors and disabled veterans, with a guarantee to sell new and used cars and parts and to make repairs at prices that did not exceed OPA ceilings, and a promise to remove any unwanted accessories from new cars where it is practicable to do so. If Packard dealers conscientiously follow these recommendations, they will indeed set a new high in public relations and be a good example to the dealers of other car manufacturers.

* * *

GOOD LEATHER SHOES are in short supply. The old nursery rhyme might well be paraphrased—"For want of a steer a sole was lost." The meat famine was responsible for a shortage of hides which are urgently needed to make leather. In October 1945, for example, tanners were allocated over two million hides as compared with one million in 1946. Argentina had hides available, but they were selling in the world market at almost twice U. S. ceiling prices. Shoe manufacturers in this country naturally saw no point in making purchases of raw materials at prices which required their selling the finished product at a loss. Consumers will just have to get their present shoes half-soled and repaired and make them do, for a time. This, however, is not a practical solution for children, who, at a certain age, outgrow their shoes very quickly.

REBUILT VACUUM CLEANERS are still somewhat in demand and homemakers should be warned of a nationwide "rebuilt but good as new" racket that has developed. The technique, as described by Argus Advisory Service (which specializes in reporting on various selling rackets), involves advertising a late model cleaner at an attractive price. An interested inquiry brings the salesman with an ancient model at the advertised price. If the housewife fails to show proper enthusiasm, he remembers a later model that he secured on a trade in that morning which is in his car. If that still fails to bring in the cash, he finds that he has still another model which is "just what she is looking for." Argus comments that the price on this last cleaner will still be a "hold-up" and suggests that a person needing a vacuum cleaner will be wise to deal with an established dealer. Many other such rackets are exposed each month in the monthly news letter from Argus Advisory Service (P. O. Box 577, Benj. Franklin Station, Washington, D. C.) for which the subscription rate is $3.50 a year.

* * *

SWEATING OUT A COLD by strenuous exercise is not an effective method of treatment, advises Dr. Franklin Henry of the University of California at Berkeley. This admonition was prompted by the results of experiments made by Dr. Henry on a group of 21 students when they were suffering from a cold and the same students when they were in good health. He found that exercise produced temporary hyperacidity in persons with colds and that a person suffering from a cold was obliged to put forth more effort when he exercised than he did for the same amount of exercise without a cold.

* * *

THE NEW 1947 AUTOMOBILES that make their appearance next year will not represent drastic changes over the 1946 models. Rather, such changes as are made will be chiefly "face-lifting" jobs, modification of front-end grilles, and changes in interior trim, announces Business Week. Scarcities of steel, copper, pig iron, and lead have brought about the decisions of Ford and General Motors to stop all work on their projected new light cars and to postpone the production of any restyled, reduced-price models, until some later date. The demand for new cars is so great that most companies would probably have little difficulty in disposing of their entire output next year even if the cars were called 1946 models, although there have been some complaints about more-troublesome-than-usual defects in 1946 new cars. According to one survey, such shortcomings as missing gaskets, leaky windshields, an improperly installed transmission, and exterior paint that came off easily have had to be corrected by repair shops in one Western city.

* * *

WASHING MACHINES are still hard to find and, added to the soap shortage, make it difficult to keep the family in clean clothes. Neither General Electric nor Apex post-war automatic washers are expected to be in production until early 1947. Other companies are operating at slow speed. The major stumbling block to full production, according to The Wall Street Journal, is the lack of tubs; these are made of sheet steel with a vitreous-enamel coating. The other almost unobtainable component is fractional horsepower motors; these are among the scarcest of all post-war shortage items, and the situation has been bad for many months.

* * *

THE NON-BREAKABLE VINYLITE RECORDS that received considerable publicity not long ago are now being given a back seat, reports Advertising Age. It appears that, aside from the fact that Vinylite records are considerably more expensive than the regular black type, they do not play satisfactorily in automatic record players. Being light and smooth they tend to slip, and some redesigning will be required, both in the record and the turntable, to permit them to perform properly in automatic players.

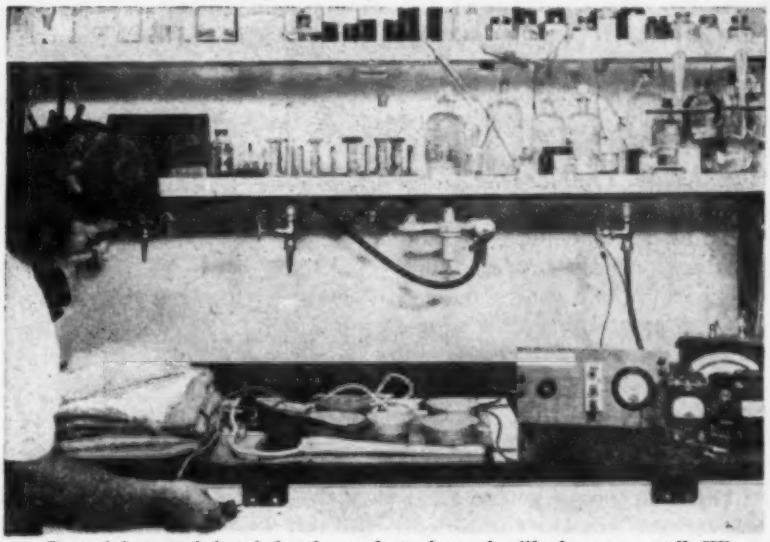
* * *

HIGH OCTANE GASOLINE has contained less than the customary amount of lead for some months. The government has limited the amount of metallic lead that may be used for this purpose and has also limited the amount of tetraethyl lead that may be delivered to the various oil companies to be added to their gasolines. One result is that there will be more "ping" in car engines, particularly when pulling hard at low speeds, or up a hill.

(The continuation of this section is on page 29.)

Electric Heating Pads

WITH the coming of cool weather consumers begin to buy heating pads, and quite a number of these appliances are purchased by the Christmas trade. There is, however, an all-year-round sale of heating pads for persons suffering from various illnesses. At the present time, the supply of heating pads is increasing, following the period of restricted production during the war; there are, nevertheless, shortages, particularly of copper and of plastic base materials, which make production uneven and somewhat uncertain. Like the table stoves which were discussed in CR's August 1946 BULLETIN, heating pads are easily produced by small or "loft" manufacturers, since the job is primarily one of assembly, and the requirements as to machinery are quite limited. The envelope or enclosing fabric of many heating pads is made of blanketing, which was and still is a very scarce item. Thus, manufacturers of heating pads have had to buy mill ends and salvage material of sizes suitable for their purposes. This situation has, of course, favored the small producer, since the large manufacturers could not afford to handle small lots and to shift colors and patterns of fabrics constantly or irregularly.



Part of the test of electric heating pads, to determine "leakage current." When the amount of leakage is considerable, it can cause a severe shock to a bedridden or helpless person, or burn the bedclothing and set it on fire.

★

The heating pad, if not properly and competently made, involves serious elements of hazard to the user. It is perhaps the most dangerous of all household appliances because of the serious injury by shock or burns, even death, that may result from its use. The pad is in close contact with the human body during normal use and pads are often applied to invalids or aged persons who are helpless or bedridden. Even normally healthy, strong young persons suffering from a temporary illness or accident, may be unable, or lack the agility or strength, to escape contact with the pad in case it either becomes too hot or becomes electrically live. Hence, the heating pad should be constructed with the utmost care, and controlled by strict inspection routines and tests. Because many heating pads are manufactured or assembled by persons who have no understanding of the engineering problems involved in designing the pads nor the possible hazards to many helpless users of badly made pads, it is probable that the sale of heating pads should be closely controlled, with some agency such as the Underwriters' Laboratories, or the American Medical Association supervising a practically 100 percent inspection of all the pads turned out. Any pad, if abused or incorrectly used, can be a hazard, and extra hazards exist whenever poor materials or production methods have been employed—as they often are. Unfortunately, most of the hazards are concealed by the cloth envelope within which the heating wire, thermostats, etc., are enclosed.

Two types of failure can occur: The first, overheating (and fatalities, even fires in homes, from this cause are by no means unknown); the second, electrical leakage occurring either as a result of original defective insulation of the unit or as a result of some deterioration in use or handling or of the entry of moisture into the pad. The result may be to cause a serious electrical shock to the user of the pad; or if the leakage current from the pad becomes great, the pad may take fire. A fire may also be caused by a short circuit resulting from accidental contact of sections of the heating unit within the pad that are at different potentials.

There are several means for reducing the heating-pad hazard. One is limitation by the manufacturer of the energy drawn by

the pad to about 0.40 watt per square inch of pad surface (for pads of over 75 sq. in. area) at any line voltage likely to occur. Another is the use of *two or more thermostats* of adequate design connected *in series* so that if one should fail, there will be a good chance that the second or third one will open the circuit, in case of overheating. Pads provided with only one thermostat are rated *C. Not Recommended* regardless of other features of construction, for an ample experience indicates that it would never be wise to let an invalid's safety depend upon the functioning of a single thermostat. Properly designed heating pads should have provisions for maintaining the temperature of the pad at any one of several values chosen by the user. Actually, many pads as now manufactured are not thus equipped. The different switch positions (low, medium, and high) simply determine the *rate* at which the pad will warm up, and the thermostat limits the final temperature obtained. The thermostats thus function essentially as safety devices which act to interrupt the supply of electrical energy to the pad when the temperature becomes excessive. In the two-thermostat three-heat type, neither thermostat exercises separate control over any section of the unit, except to the extent that its temperature may vary because of its location with respect to the section of the unit energized at the time. Control was inadequate in the pads of this type tested.

Of all of the nine heating pads tested, only the two Samson United pads and the *Universal* pad were supplied with units and thermostats in circuit arrangements designed *to permit effective temperature control* by the thermostats. (In the case of the specimen tested of the *Universal* pad, they were not actually effective.)

The temperature of a pad of the usual type, with a cover of some textile or rubberized material, should not be permitted to exceed 150°F. (The Underwriters' specifications permit the very high temperature of 212°F—the temperature of boiling water.)

People who intend to purchase a heating pad should remember that the conventional heating pads with cloth covers have electrically shocked and burned the bodies of many users and have been responsible for setting a very large number of fires, often of course under conditions (e.g., old age, grave illness) extremely dangerous to life; no heating pad covered only with cloth can be considered safe for sick-room use. Even with the rubber-covered pads, there are dangers, for example, of local overheating or parts becoming live, due to some alteration of the internal parts in use or through cracks, abrasions, or accidental punctures (perhaps with a safety pin) of the rubber covering, or failure of the insulation of the wiring immediately adjacent to the pad.

Some heating pads achieve different temperature levels by arranging the resistance wire in two sections so that either section may be used alone, one to provide for low and one for medium heat, or both connected in parallel; the latter, of course, would provide the high temperature position. In another arrangement, there is a single section of resistance wire with "tappings" at intervals for various switch positions.

The heating unit is usually made of resistance wire wound on a cord and covered with asbestos. All except the *Bilt-Rite* in the present test were made in that way. Proper design requires that this wire should be securely fixed in position in the pad so that none of the wires can be displaced and cause a short circuit.

The heating unit should be securely fastened to the "base sheet" in such a way that there is no possibility that it can loosen and permit any contact between different sections of the unit, or between a part of the unit and the terminals of a thermostat, etc. Because the "base sheets" are usually muslin or some similar textile, a good job of sewing seems to be the best way of accomplishing this. Cementing the unit to the "base sheet" requires careful choice of materials, and good workmanship; the method as used in the *Bilt-Rite* pad may be potentially unsafe. The sewing must be done in such a way that the needle cannot break the resistance wire of the unit (as occurred in the manufacture of one of the pads in the test).

The power supply cord should have adequate means for strain relief, so that the unit cannot be pulled from the pad by a pull on the connecting cord. Waterproof pads were tested under 35 pounds stress to determine if seal was impaired; other pads were tested for ability to withstand a pull of 50 pounds between pad and cord, except the *Bilt-Rite*, which had no provision for taking strain of cord. With this exception, all were satisfactory as to strength of attachment of cord.

Because of the way in which a pad is often used, it is subjected to wetting, accidental or from normal perspiration. Nothing less than complete protection of the wiring and resistance wire element from access of moisture can assure full safety. CR's tests have shown repeatedly that unless *fully waterproof* construction is used, a pad which initially has high insulation resistance may become a source of great danger when subjected to moisture; an initially insignificant leakage of current can increase to several amperes when a pad is wet. Any such leakage as that, of course, produces grave danger of electrocution or burning to death. It should be noted that even in the rare cases where a pad is completely safe from the current-leakage standpoint, there may be dangerously high temperatures attained at some parts of the pad; this was found to be a difficulty with one pad in a pre-war test that met the safety requirements as to current leakage.

The Association of Edison Illuminating Companies some years

ago developed specifications setting the very conservative limit of 0.2 milliamperes for leakage current but the Underwriters' Laboratories' Standard for heating pads (Sept. 1942 edition) allows 2.4 ma. leakage after exposure for 24 hours to moist air. An authority on electrical appliances has expressed the opinion that the Underwriters' Standard is a reasonable one and assures the user sufficient protection, but pads with high leakage current under damp air conditions, even though the Underwriters' limit is not exceeded, are much less desirable purchases than those showing almost no leakage (close-to-zero leakage is a practical possibility for a well-made heating pad).

In effect, the only pad which is safe for use is one whose unit is securely sealed (vulcanized) into rubber or some equally tough, strong, and durable material impervious to water; even a rubber-covered heating pad should be inspected to detect promptly any cracking of the covering which may occur with age. A waterproof cover, as of rubberized cloth, serves to delay the seepage of water into a pad, but does not prevent it; the knowledge that a pad has such a cover may give a false sense of security. The pads tested were measured for current leakage as received, and again after exposure for 24 hours to moist air having a relative humidity of approximately 85% at a temperature of about 86°F. Removable covers, if furnished with the pad, were taken off for this test.

The thermostats used in heating pads produce radio interference, which at best may take the form of a click each time the circuit is broken, and which at worst may be a rasping sound. One pre-war pad that happened to be electrically safe, was found, when tested, to produce very severe radio interference which affected radios as far away as a city block. The degree of annoyance caused is largely dependent upon the frequency with which the current is turned on and off, and that in turn depends upon the conditions under which the pad is being used. All the pads tested were found to produce rather severe radio interference.

The warming-up curves of the various pads showed that temperatures were far from uniform over the surfaces; however, unless there are spots on the surface of a pad at which the temperature exceeds the safe value of 150°F, this is not an important defect.

For sanitary reasons, a separate removable outer cover of some washable fabric is desirable. If the pad is waterproof, the separate cover need not be, while if the pad itself is not impervious to water, a waterproof outer cover adds some protection, but at that, only a moderate amount, which must not be depended upon to assure safety.

Flexibility in a pad is important because it must often be wrapped around a part of the body, as an arm or leg. For long life, a pad should be subjected to as little bending as possible; when stored, it should be laid flat in a box of adequate size—never folded.

Voltage-breakdown tests and durability tests were not carried out on these heating pads because the quality of the appliances, with the exception of those rated *A* and *B*, as now being offered was not considered sufficiently high to warrant the expense of the extra determinations.

It must be understood that while the listings which follow will help the consumer avoid inferior or unsafe products, they cannot possibly guarantee that no unsafe product may be found among some of the better pads, for, as has been indicated, there are many factors, including the elements of carelessness or failure of inspection in the factory, which might result in a fatal defect. Hence, the only safe attitude toward heating pads is one of care and caution and close inspection at all times.

Rated wattages are shown in the listings unless pad was unmarked; measured wattages are not shown (except for the unmarked *Bilt-Rite*) unless there was an appreciable difference in the measured and rated values. Actual wattages were within the recommended upper limit of 0 4 watt per square inch of pad surface unless otherwise noted.

A. Recommended

Samson Safe-T, Model 6686 (Samson United Corp., Rochester, N. Y.) $6.48. A fully waterproof heating pad, made of rubber, with vulcanized seams. Removable outer cover of heavy-grade blanket felt, zipper-closed. Rated at 55 watts input at 115 volts. Four thermostats, so connected that two are in series for each of the three positions of the switch; good control over separate heats. Current leakage in the pad as received or after humidity test, so small as to be practically not detectable. Average temperatures after stability was attained: high, 167°F; medium, 142°F; low, 129°F. This pad was of excellent workmanship and material. The only objection found in the test was the excessive temperature attained at "high" heat.

Samson Safe-T, Hospital Type, Model 5588 (Samson United Corp.) $8.11. A fully waterproof heating pad, rubber, with vulcanized seams. Removable outer cover made of strong muslin, treated with DuPont Zelan for waterproofing. Designed for hospital use. Rated at 55 watts at 115 volts. Three heats, controlled by 10 thermostats, so connected that 6 thermostats are used for each of the 3 heats; regulation good. Same comment applies to current leakage as with the *Samson Safe-T*, Model 6686. Average temperatures after stability was attained: high, 147°F; medium, 129°F; low, 115°F (fully satisfactory). Workmanship and material were excellent.

B. Intermediate

General Electric PS 5A 3 (General Electric Co., Bridgeport, Conn.) $5.60. Pad is made of rubberized cloth, with sewn seams—not waterproof; removable outer cover of blanket felt, closed by snap fasteners. Rated at 50 watts at 115 volts. Three heats. Two thermostats are used, in series with a common lead; good control on "medium" and

"high" heats. Current leakage in the pad after humidity test without cover, appreciable, and above that of the two *Samsons* but still very low compared with all the *C*-rated pads. Approved by Underwriters' Laboratories. Average temperatures after stability was attained: high, 133°F; medium, 113°F; low, 108°F.

C. Not Recommended

The leakage current, under damp-air conditions, of all pads rated *C. Not Recommended* was considerably higher than of those rated *A* and *B*.

Bilt-Rite (Bilt-Rite Electric Products Co., 509 Willis Ave., New York 55) $3.75. Considered least satisfactory of the pads tested. Unit had poor insulation and was cemented to the "base sheet." Measured input at 118 volts was 67 watts (somewhat higher than the maximum permissible value of 62.4 watts for a pad of 156 sq. in. area). No strain relief provided for cord. Heat control by a single thermostat, adding to the picture of a potentially dangerous pad. Cover of a cotton material similar to that used for pockets of cheap topcoats. Base sheet treated with alleged waterproofing compound of unpleasant odor. No removable outer cover. Pad was incorrectly marked "Wetproof." Leakage current under damp-air conditions, relatively high.

Casco, Model H-1211 X (Casco Products Co., Bridgeport, Conn.) $5.60. Encased in lightweight blanket felting; removable outer cover of waterproof rubberized cloth, closed at one end by snap fasteners. Rated at 55 watts at 115 volts. A variable resistance control was claimed to provide "30 positive heats," but control was partly ineffective. Two thermostats in series in a common lead; poor thermal control. Average temperatures after thermal stability was attained: Heat No. 30, 120°F (considerably too low for top heat; otherwise pad might have warranted a *B* rating); Heat No. 15, 99°F; Heat No. 5, 84°F.

Casco, Model H-1230 X (Casco Products Corp.) $3.48. Encased in blanket felting; no removable outer cover. Rated 55 watts at 115 volts. Three heats. Two thermostats in series in a common lead provided only fair control on "high" and "medium" heats—were ineffective on "low." Leakage current under damp-air conditions, relatively high. Average temperatures after thermal stability was attained: high, 126°F; medium, 122°F; low, 118°F. Unit wire was found broken in two places, presumably by needle of sewing machine during manufacture.

Kil-Pane (C. F. Piehl Co., Bay Shore, N.Y.) $5.25. Encased in blanket felting; no removable cover. Rated 60 watts at 100 to 125 volts; measured input was 76 watts at 118 volts; too high for area of pad. Three heats; only one thermostat. Leakage current under damp-air conditions, relatively high. Average temperatures after thermal stability was attained: high, 135°F; medium, 127°F; low, 122°F.

Thermotex (Varick Electric Mfg. Co., Inc., 10 Washington Place, New York 3) $5.80. Encased in blanket felting; no removable cover. Rated 60 watts at 100 to 125 volts. Three heats. Only one thermostat. Temperature control, unsatisfactory. Current leakage under damp-air conditions, high. Average temperatures after thermal stability attained: high, 135°F; medium, 127°F; low, 118°F.

Universal, EA-7245 (Landers, Frary & Clark, New Britain, Conn.) $6.25. Encased in felt blanketing of good quality; removable cover of waterproof rubberized cloth, closed at one end by snap fasteners. Rated 65 watts at 100 to 125 volts; measured input was 67.5 watts at 118 volts; higher than maximum permissible 62.4 watts for a pad of 156 sq. in. area. Three heats. Four thermostats, one acting as safety control; each of the other three set for a different temperature. Heat control, poor. Switch of flimsy construction. Leakage current under damp-air, conditions, relatively high. Average temperatures after thermal stability was attained: high, 147°F; medium, 133°F; low, inoperative. Approved by Underwriters' Laboratories.

Electric Irons

Two additional brands tested

In the test of the two irons here reported, temperature measurements were made on the sole plates at different thermostat settings, on the shell, and on the thermostat control knob (150°F is the highest safe temperature at this point to avoid burning of fingers). Measurements were also made of the area of the sole plates and of current leakage and safety against electrical breakdown. Workmanship and construction were critically examined and finally practical ironing tests were made by six persons skilled in ironing, each of whom indicated her judgment of the satisfactoriness of each iron in turn as to ease of operation and quality of ironing done. The figures in parentheses following the rated watts are the wattages of the irons as measured. Both irons were of the automatic type and both satisfactorily passed the tests for current leakage and safety against electrical breakdown.

A. Recommended

General Electric, Cat. No. 119F13 (General Electric Co., Bridgeport, Conn.) $9.50. Weight including cord, 3 lb., 3 oz. (a very satisfactory weight). Rated watts, 1000 (1016). Sole plate area, 26 sq. in. Sole plate polished aluminum (more readily scratched than a sole plate of chromium-plated steel), and had two "button nooks" at front. Handle equipped with thumb rest, and had

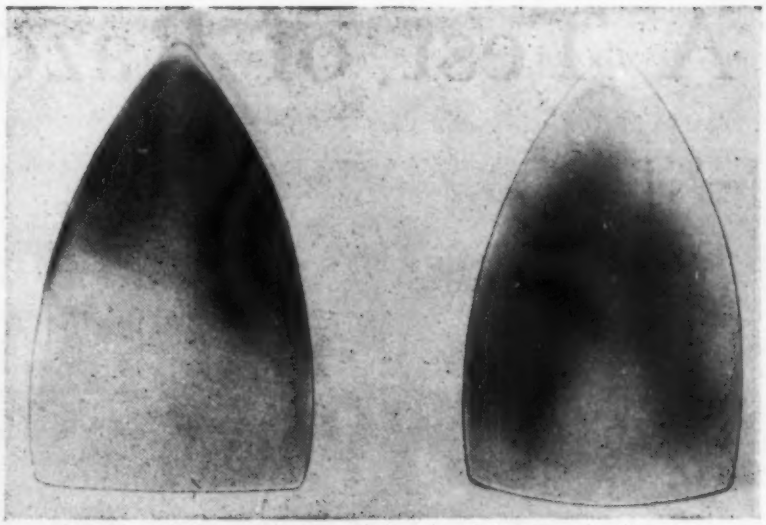
A total of 16 post-war irons have already been reported on in CR's Bulletins as follows: February and April 1945—*Dominion*, Model No. 1002; *Sunbeam Iron Master*, Model A-4; *Universal*, No. 0184; *Heatmaster Super Duty; Super Lectric*, Models 220W and 205W; *General Electric Hi-Speed Calrod; Handyhot*, Model 242A; *Ward's*, Cat. No. 86—2699; *Westinghouse*, Model LPC—414C. August 1946—*Bayshore A-1*, No. 6; *Fostoria*, No. 507; *Petipoint; Samson*, No. 5000 N; *Durabilt Winsted*, No. 191; *Greyhound*, Model F (the two last named being light "travel" irons).

The present report includes two additional irons; because of the continued lag in production of electric irons these two are all that have been purchasable up to this time, beyond those already tested.

built-in small red indicating light similar to a flashlight bulb, to indicate when iron reached the selected temperature. Non-detachable cord and plug of excellent quality; cord emerged from side of iron (good design). Temperature of shell (part above sole plate) above average, but judged sufficiently low for comfortable ironing. Thermostat control knob became excessively hot at high temperature settings. Speed of heating, very good; evenness of heating, good. Temperature of sole plate too low at rayon, silk, and cotton setting. Quality of materials, good; but in the event the cast-in *Calrod* unit burns out, complete sole plate would require replacement. Ease of servicing judged poor. Ranked first with *Manning Bowman*, of six regular-sized irons (see next listing) in practical ironing test. **2**

B. Intermediate

Manning Bowman, Model 2494 (Manning Bowman, Meriden, Conn.) $11.15. Weight including cord, 4 lb., 12 oz. (rather heavy; would be too heavy for some users). Rated watts, 1000 (1050). Sole plate area, 25 sq. in. Sole plate chrome plated. Non-detachable cord and plug of excellent quality. Cord was attached to iron by a swivel arrangement which permitted cord to move freely to either side of iron. (It is not yet possible to be sure whether this arrangement will work out satisfactorily in a long period of use; the principle looks good and it should increase convenience. It may possibly give some difficulties that can not now be foreseen, in practical use.) All of the operators thought this arrangement good, yet preferred a removable cord. Temperature of shell (part above sole plate) sufficiently low for comfortable ironing. Temperature control knob at top limit of safe temperature to touch. First sample tested had defective thermostat, but a second sample did not have this fault. Evenness and speed of heating, good. Thermostat of iron tested was set a little low, for cotton and linen. Quality of construction and materials used, good; the construction, however, is such that the manufacturer evidently intended that if the element burned out, the complete sole plate should be replaced. Ease of servicing judged poor. Ranked first, with *General Electric*, of six regular-sized irons tested (*Bayshore*, *Fostoria*, *Petipoint*, *Samson*, *Manning Bowman*, and *GE 119F13*) in practical ironing tests. If the thermostat fault is corrected and swivel arrangement proves durable in use, the iron will probably warrant an *A* rating. **3**



Scorch patterns—left, *General Electric*; right, *Manning Bowman*.

Manning Bowman *General Electric*

A Test of Razor Blades

EXPERIENCE has shown that few people differ about what is a *good* safety razor blade, since a good blade successfully meets most men's requirements in shaving. Unfortunately good blades are all too scarce, and the average man, unaided by test findings such as those of CR, will take a lot of trial and error before he finds what he wants. And then, it may happen that the next package of even one of the better and more uniform brands may show mediocre, even poor, performance.

There can be a wide difference of opinion of what constitutes a *poor* blade, for some people find blades satisfactory that are only tolerable or barely usable, to others. This should be remembered in considering the personal opinions of various people on what blades have been found good and poor. It is with regard to a poor blade that differences of opinion exist. Certain individuals do not require a carefully sharpened and honed blade for a satisfactory shave.

Variations in shaving technique and preparation of the face for shaving likewise have a bearing on the matter of getting a good, smooth shave. Many men do not give enough weight to the improvement in the shave that can be realized when care is taken to prepare the face properly. It is recommended that the face be thoroughly washed with toilet soap and warm water for a half minute and then rinsed so as to remove dirt, sweat, and sebum before actual shaving preparation starts. Whether a lathering or non-lathering shaving medium is used, the temperature of the accompanying water should be not far below 110°F, as a temperature in this region has been found most advantageous for beard softening. At least three minutes (five minutes for white or gray hairs) should be allowed for the shaving preparation to soften the beard effectively. The razor should be wet with hot water and both the razor and face kept constantly wet throughout the shaving. The most generally satisfactory angle at which to hold the blade to the face is about 30°. The procedure which has been described not only makes for a more satisfactory and painless shave, but also helps to make blades last longer.

Best results from any blade can be obtained by stropping it frequently. Even with a new and unused safety razor blade, stropping will usually produce a marked improvement in keenness. The well-known *Twinplex* stropper works well on *Gillette*-type blades. There are other good stropping devices, but so far as is known, these have not yet become generally available again following the cutting off of their production during the war.

Blades were tested on a new instrument, designed by CR, shown in the illustration. In operation, the blade is clamped into position and the cutting edge of the blade, under a vertical load of about 25 grams, is moved back and forth at the rate of 50 complete strokes per minute with a sawing action over a strip of paper especially selected because of its type and uniformity. It has been found that a poorly sharpened or honed carbon steel blade, or one that has been used so long that it has become dull or nicked, will cut through the paper in as little as a single complete stroke; a well sharpened and honed blade does not

saw its way through the paper quickly, but may give 40, 60, even in exceptional cases considerably more than 100 complete cycles of movement before cutting through to the other side of the paper.

The design of the device is such that at the instant the blade has cut through to the lower side of the paper, an electrical contact is made between the blade and a strip of graphite-impregnated paper beneath; this acts through an electronic relay to shut off the motion of the machine. An electrically operated counter indicates the number of complete strokes the blade has made up to that point. (The graphited paper referred to is sufficiently conductive that it can pass a minute electrical current, and the action of the electronic relay is very sensitive, responding to the tiny current that would flow in a circuit containing a very high resistance [of about ten million ohms], which forms part of the input circuit of the relay.)

The instrument described and illustrated is quite sensitive to small differences in the keenness of the blades. It readily measures the breakdown of the edge and its increasing roughness with successive shaves, and it also shows the improved sharpness produced by sharpening a blade with a stropping device. Some blades which obtain a very poor rating when subjected to the instrumental test will, upon being sharpened, for example, with the *Twinplex* stropper, give a very good account of themselves—may indeed exceed the 100 strokes referred to as characteristic of a very superior blade. The device is in effect a method of totalizing or integrating the microscopic saw-edge-like roughnesses of the blade. For example, an edge with a single nick visible at a moderate magnification of say about 40, will cut through the paper in a few strokes; a blade in which no distinct nicks or notches at all are noticeable under that magnification, as has already been indicated, may go well past 100 complete back-and-forth motions before the thickness of the paper (approximately .002 in.) is passed through. Blades of stainless steel appear to become dull without developing the saw-edge characteristic, possibly because the extremely thin sharp cutting edge is tough, rather than brittle, and does not break away from the thicker portions of the edge with use, and such blades must therefore be tested by other means.

Several of the blades tested would have received higher ratings were it not for their variability. Sometimes different blades in a package, sometimes the two edges of a single blade, show wide variation. Since it is often not possible for the average consumer to purchase the exact brand of blades wanted, we have, for the convenience of subscribers, indicated the brands that were found most uniform in quality and those that were not found uniform. (In the non-uniform brands there were sometimes good or very good blades in a package, along with poor ones.)

Before the tests were proceeded with, steps were taken to check on the correlation of the instrument test results with performance of blades in actual use. This correlation was found very satisfactory. Unfortunately, both use and the instrumental test cause breakdown of the cutting edge of the blade, so that there is no practicable means for applying identical tests to the same blade edge in the same condition. In a future article, reproductions will be shown of photomicrographs indicating various blade conditions. These will include pictures of new blades of exceptional quality; new blades with edges in poor condition, such as will result in cutting through the test paper in one or a very few strokes; and used blades after a considerable period of shaving.

The ratings apply to new blades as received, without stropping; the ratings do not give consideration to the susceptibility of the various brands to resharpening by stropping, which will be the subject of a later report.

Prices given in parentheses are per blade; price ratings are on a per-edge basis.

A. Recommended

Blades rated *A. Recommended* were found to be of relatively uniformly good quality.

Gillette Type

Master Cutler Thin (Edwin Jay Inc., 49 E. 34 St., New York 1) 25 for 50c (2c). **AA1**

Cadet (Distributed by F. W. Woolworth stores) 5 for 10c (2c). **1**

Cadet De Luxe Thin (Distributed by F. W. Woolworth stores) 5 for 10c (2c). **1**

Clix (Clix Div., Conrad Razor Blade Co., Inc., N.Y.C.) 8 for 10c (1¼c). **1**

Clix Thin (Clix Div., Conrad Razor Blade Co., Inc.) 5 for 10c (2c). **1**

Red Cap (Distributed by F. W. Woolworth stores) 20 for 25c (1¼c). **1**

Excalibur Stainless (Stainless Razor Blade Corp., 907 Broadway, New York 10) 3 for 25c (8 1/3c). **3**

Blades Other Than Gillette Type

Gem Micromatic (Gem Div., American Safety Razor Corp., Brooklyn, N. Y.) 5 for 25c (5c). **3**

B. Intermediate

Brands preceding the 3 asterisks were found relatively uniform in quality.

Gillette Type

Dunlap (Sold by Sears, Roebuck & Co.) 50 for 79c (1.6c). **1**

Probak Junior (Probak Div., Gillette Safety Razor Co.) 4 for 10c (2.5c). **1**

St. Regis (Distributed by McKesson & Robbins, Inc., N.Y.C.) 5 for 10c (2c). **1**

Star (Star Div., American Safety Razor Corp., Brooklyn, N.Y.) 4 for 10c (2.5c). **1**

Blades Other Than Gillette Type

Ever-Ready (American Safety Razor Corp.) 5 for 35c (7c). **3**

* * *

Although not uniform in quality, packages of the following have contained some good blades.

Gillette Type

Barbasol (The Barbasol Co., Indianapolis) 5 for 10c (2c). **1**

Berkeley (Consolidated Razor Blade Co., Inc., 26 Cornelison Ave., Jersey City 4, N. J.) 18 for 25c (1.4c). **1**

Marlin (Marlin Firearms Co., New Haven, Conn.) 18 for 25c (1.4c). **1**

Pal Hollow Ground (Pal Blade Co., Plattsburg, N. Y.) 10 for 25c (2.5c). **1**

Berkeley "Tissue Thin" (Consolidated Razor Blade Co., Inc.) 3 for 10c (3-1/3c). **2**

Ritz (Hoffritz, Inc., N. Y. C.) 6 for 25c (4.2c). **2**

Gillette Blue (Gillette Safety Razor Co.) 2 for 10c (5c). **3**

Mark Cross (Mark Cross, N. Y. C.) 10 for 52c (5.2c). **3**

Blades Other Than Gillette Type

Rialto (Lawrence Distrib. Corp., Brooklyn, N. Y.) 5 for 10c (2c). For *Gem* and *Ever-Ready* type razors. **2**

Schick Injector (Magazine Repeating Razor Co., Bridgeport, Conn.) 20 for 69c (3.4c). **3**

C. Not Recommended

Gillette Type

Barflex Extra Thin (Manufacturer unknown) 5 for 10c (2c). Manufacturer's name not given, yet the phrase "Unconditionally Guaranteed" was printed on carton. **1**

Gillette Thin (Gillette Safety Razor Co.) 4 for 10c (2.5c). **1**

Permedge (United Drug Co., Boston) 5 for 10c (2c). **1**

Shav-A-Way (Sold only in Murphy stores) 6 for 10c (1-2/3c). **1**

Smooth-Shave (Utility Blade Corp., Cranford, N. J.) 6 for 10c (1-2/3c). **1**

Thin-Flex (General Blade Co., N.Y.C.) 50 for $1.40 postpaid (2.8c). **1**

Thynne (Colton Razor Blade Co., Boston) 7 for 10c (1.4c). **1**

Tuxedo (Colton Razor Blade Co.) 5 for 10c (2c). **1**

Ultra Marine Thin (Utility Blade & Razor Co.) 6 for 10c (1-2/3c). **1**

Wisp Super Thin (Sold only by S. S. Kresge Co.) 12 for 25c (2.08c). **1**

Wexteel (E. Weck & Co., 135 Johnson St., Brooklyn 1, N. Y.) 10 for 35c (3.5c). **2**

Cooper (Cooper Products Corp., 35 York St., Brooklyn 1, N.Y.) 5 for 25c (5c). **3**

Kant Rust (Cooper & Cooper, Inc., Brooklyn, N. Y.) 3 for 25c (8-1/3c). **3**

Personna (Personna Blade Co., N.Y.C.) 10 for $1 (10c). **3**

Truflex (Gillette Safety Razor Co.) 2 for 10c (5c). **3**

Blades Other Than Gillette Type

Treet (Treet Safety Razor Corp., Brooklyn, N.Y.) 4 for 10c (2.5c). **2**

Valet Auto Strop (Autostrop Sales Co., Inc., Boston) 2 for 10c (5c). **3**

Ready-Made Automobile Seat Covers

EVERY one of the millions of owners of old cars with badly worn upholstery is a potential buyer of a set of seat covers, with which many will hope to rejuvenate the appearance of the well-worn interior of an over-age car. Then, too, new cars seem so precious in the sight of those fortunate enough to be able to obtain them right now, that many purchasers will want to install seat covers at once on their new and handsome acquisitions in order to give the upholstery a longer life.

With these observations in mind, samples of available automobile seat covers of the ready-made type were purchased and tested.

Though the purchasing was done in the late spring, covers were still in very short supply, like most other textile products, and considerable difficulty and a long period of shopping was involved in obtaining the rather limited number reported on here. Several dealers were quite frank in saying that when their present supplies were exhausted, there was no certainty that replacements of the same quality would be available or even that there would be replacements. This situation still obtains, more than a year after V-J Day.

In several of the samples,

use had been made of army surplus materials such as coverall fabric, filled duck, etc.; this, it may be assumed, was a temporary expedient rather than a permanent practice. In most of the samples, the main panel of each cover was made of a fabric woven of paper threads, sewn to side strips made of a cotton textile fabric. Paper fabrics have been found cooler than cotton, while both are cooler than the napped fabrics of automobile upholstery.

Under the circumstances, the results of this test can at best be only guides in helping purchasers to obtain the type of covers which will give the best satisfaction, but an attempt has been made to generalize the findings sufficiently to enable readers to recognize the qualities to be sought in buying.

Fit and appearance were judged to be the most important characteristics of auto seat covers, with fading third; the last named is intimately allied with continued good appearance. Workmanship, good or bad, is almost always an indication of the standards which a manufacturer maintains in his processes and fortunately can be judged fairly well by the consumer who is a close observer of things he buys. Materials should be firmly woven, fairly heavy, and smooth enough on the surface that snagging cannot occur easily.

Fit was determined by actually installing the covers in cars for which they were made; all the work was done by a nonprofessional, not an expert fitter, as the average buyer would quite probably install his own covers. In each listing is an indication of the approximate time taken to make a quick installation of the covers. The figures will be roughly indicative of the relative time and trouble involved, but in some cases, a final and complete installation would take longer than the time shown. Judgment as to whether the fit was good or bad was based on the slackness or bulges of the cover in various places. It was also found that in some cases after covers were permanently installed and firmly anchored in place, fit could be improved, if bulges occurred, by moistening areas where there was too much fullness and allowing the fabric to shrink to the needed size.

Judgment of appearance was made with the covers in place and was based on the coverage of the major seat areas by the main fabric of the covers, the amount of border fabric which was exposed, and other relevant factors.

Samples of main and border fabrics and artificial leather reinforcements were subjected to a 40-hour fading test in the Fade-ometer (equivalent to 52 hours of June sunlight in the latitude of Washington, D.C.).

Quality of workmanship was judged after an examination of the seams, types of stitching used, evidences of carelessness in assembly, unwarranted cheapening of the product, etc.

In examining the materials, thread counts and thicknesses of the textile and paper fabrics were determined; thickness of the artificial leather was measured; base fabrics, elastic gore fabrics, and pipings were inspected for comparative quality. Quality of the fabrics was judged to be in direct ratio to the thickness and number of threads per square inch.

Wear (abrasion) tests on the materials were not made because an examination of a number of worn seat covers failed to disclose any consistently recurring reasons for failure related to abrasion resistance. However, an examination of seat covers already installed and used showed that wear had developed in the parts of the cover subjected to concentrated stresses in the particular car where the covers were in use; these effects reflected the care and habits of the owners.

In rating the covers, fit and appearance were given the greatest (and equal) weight. Fading was judged third in importance; both workmanship and materials were also considered.

A. Recommended

Wards Supreme (Montgomery Ward's Cat. No. 61–4522) $9.95, plus postage. Main fabric: Twill-weave paper cloth .048 in. thick, appeared to be lacquered; thread count, 17 x 10. Border fabric: Plain weave dark blue cotton with stiff finish, .015 in. thick; thread count, 48 x 36. Artificial leather on rear seat back, maroon embossed on Osnaburg backing, .016 in. thick. Piping, heavy tan twill casing over cord. Elastic insets had elastic threads every 7/16 in. Fit, very good. Appearance, very good, although main fabric did not cover all major areas completely and some exposed areas of the border fabric were visible. There was only slight fading of the main fabric but the border fabric faded considerably. Workmanship, fairly good. Materials, good. Complete directions and hardware for installation came with the covers. Installation time, 16 minutes for 5 pieces. **2**

Goodwear Highlander (Goodwear Auto Fabrics, 2262 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn 26, N.Y.) $15.98. Main fabric: Filled flat duck .024 in. thick; maroon, printed in a plaid pattern; thread count, 76 x 28. Border fabric: Maroon rep .013 in. thick; thread count, 120 x 42. Artificial

leather reinforcements on edges of seat cushions, reddish brown embossed on a napped drill backing, .023 in. thick. Piping, brown artificial leather .020 in. thick, sewn around paper cord. Elastic insets, maroon square-woven with elastic threads spaced 9/16 in. apart. Fit, fair to good. Appearance, very good. Slight fading occurred in the maroon color of main fabric. Workmanship, good. Materials, exceptionally good. Pieces of wire bent to resemble heavy staples and tacks furnished for installation. No directions came with the covers but approximate installation time was reasonably short (12 minutes for 4 pieces). **3**

Universal, 700 Series (Hinson Mfg. Co., Waterloo, Iowa) $16.95. Main fabric: Twill weave paper cloth .035 in. thick; thread count, 16 x 10. Border fabric: Dark blue material similar to sail cloth, .014 in. thick; thread count, 66 x 45. Artificial leather reinforcements at tops of front and rear seat back covers, maroon embossed on napped drill base, .020 in. thick. Elastic gores at sides of front seat back cover, maroon square weave with elastic threads 9/16 in. apart. Fit, very good. Appearance, very good with all major surfaces completely covered by the main fabric. Very slight fading of the paper fabric. Workmanship, good. Materials, good. All hardware necessary for installation was furnished with the covers. There were no directions, and time for installation was fairly long (27 minutes for 5 pieces). **3**

B. Intermediate

Aristocrat DeLuxe L4 (Evr-klean Seat Pad Co., 2301 Madison St., St. Louis 6) $14.95. Main fabric: Twill-weave paper cloth .035 in. thick; thread count, 20 x 9. Border fabric: Dark brown cotton coverall cloth, herringbone twill weave with shadow stripe, .017 in. thick; thread count, 76 x 48. Artificial leather reinforcements on fronts of cushions and tops of seat covers, medium green embossed on a base of print cloth, .013 in. thick. Elastic gores, square-woven with elastic threads spaced 7/16 in. apart. Fit, good. Appearance good, but main fabric did not cover rear seat back completely, and considerable areas of border cloth are exposed. Fading was noticeable in both main and border fabrics. Workmanship, poor; coarse stitches, main fabric edges not all caught up, poorly made hinge notch in front cushion cover, and binding tape on pockets carelessly sewed on. Materials, good. A small number of pins, several pieces of wire with ends bent over to form hooks with which to fasten fabric to the springs, and a few tacks were furnished for installation. No directions were included. Installation time, 19 minutes for 5 pieces. **3**

Trophy (Mfr. unknown; sold by Berger's, 1915-17 S. State, Chicago 16) $16.95. Main fabric: Paper cloth woven like duck, .035 in. thick; thread count, 18 x 10. Border fabric: Army O.D. coverall material, herringbone twill weave, shadow stripes, .019 in. thick; thread count, 72 x 48. Artificial leather reinforcement on top of cover for back of the front seat, maroon embossed on muslin base, .016 in. thick. Elastic gores, square-woven with elastic threads 5/8 in. apart. Fit, fair to good. Appearance, only fair, as main fabric did not cover major surfaces completely, and considerable areas of border fabric were exposed. Main fabric faded considerably. Workmanship and materials, good. Tacks and pins were furnished for installation and six tubes for anchoring. No directions were included. Installation time, 17 minutes for 4 pieces. **3**

C. Not Recommended

Ready-Fit (Elfield Mfg. Co., Chicago) $2.69. Main fabric: Very loosely woven maroon plaid square-woven material resembling a coarse scrim, .028 in. thick; thread count, 20 x 16. Border fabric: Similar material in a plain cream color, .023 in. thick; thread count, 20 x 17. Main fabric, treated with *Aridex*, a water repellent which also acts as a stiffener. Fit, poor. Appearance poor because main fabric did not cover major seat areas, and light-colored border fabric was exposed. No fading occurred. Workmanship, fairly good. Materials, very poor. No hardware was necessary for the installation of this cover, but elastic bands for attachment, mentioned on the carton, were not present. Directions for installation were printed on the box. Installation time, 8 minutes for 1-piece coupe type. **1**

Guarantee, No. 120 (A-2-Z Mfrs., Inc., 783-9 Coney Island Ave., Brooklyn 18, N.Y.) $14.50. Main fabric: Light gray warp faced twill, printed with blue and yellow pattern, .016 in. thick; thread count, 78 x 42. Border cloth: Medium blue, square weave, loose woven cotton, .015 in. thick. Artificial leather reinforcement on edge of front cushion and top of front seat back cover, blue embossed on Osnaburg backing, .013 in. thick. Piping, tan square-woven bias-cut fabric over soft cotton roving. Elastic gore, dark blue, square-woven, with elastic threads 5/8 in. apart. Fit, poor; rear cushion cover too large and front cushion cover not designed properly to pass seat hinges. Appearance, very good, with all major surfaces covered by main fabric and no border fabric showing. Fading, very bad in main fabric and noticeable in border fabric. Workmanship, "sketchy" and poor with odd pieces of material sewn on here and there. Materials, poor. C-shaped pieces of steel wire (with open ends pointed which overlap when ring is forced into a circle) and tacks were furnished for installation. No directions were included. Installation time, fairly long (23 minutes for 5 pieces). **3**

Park Central (S. E. Hyman Co., Fremont, Ohio) $15.98. Main and border fabrics: Olive drab filled duck, .018 in. thick; thread count, 60 x 32. Artificial leather reinforcements on top of both front and rear seat back covers, maroon embossed on a sheeting base, .013 in. thick. Piping, cream-colored artificial leather over cord filler. Elastic side pieces, maroon square-woven with elastic threads 3/4 in. apart. Fit, poor. Appearance, poor. No fading of fabric, but artificial leather faded. Workmanship, good. Materials, fair. Four anchor tubes, pins, and hooks were furnished for installation. Directions were included. Installation time, 17 minutes for 4 pieces. **3**

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Cumulative Index for Consumers' Research Bulletins

July 1946 through December 1946

(Vol. 18, No. 1 through Vol. 18, No. 6.)

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Six Additional Table-Model Radio Receivers, a Portable Receiver, and Two Radio-Phonographs

Table-Model Radio Receivers

C. Not Recommended

Silvertone (Sears-Roebuck's Cat. No. 6002) $11.20, Zone 1; $11.75, Zone 2. 4 tubes. Had metal cabinet. Parts of average quality, workmanship good. Ease of servicing considered good. Sensitivity and selectivity fair, probably adequate for local reception. Some spurious responses noted. Approximate audio range 150 to 4300 cycles (good). Acoustic quality judged poor. Output at 10% distortion, 0.9 watt. Hum noticeable when not tuned to station. Due to its metal case, this set had a rather high degree of shock hazard, since if used in the vicinity of a kitchen sink or other grounded metal object, there would be a constant threat of a mild electric shock (as, for example, if one hand touched the set and another should touch a stove top, water pipe, or other grounded equipment). (Leakage current from metal case or chassis to ground, 2.4 milliamperes.) It is considered that metal outside cases should not be used for radio receivers that go into ultimate consumers' hands. Bore Underwriters' label. **1**

Sentinel, Model 284W (Sentinel Radio Corp., Evanston, Ill.) $23.40. 5 tubes. Well-made brown plastic cabinet. Parts, workmanship, and ease of servicing all better than average. Sensitivity and selectivity very good, aided by quality of certain components (iron-core i.f. transformers). Approximate audio range, 140 to 2500 cycles (unusually low). Acoustic quality judged satisfactory, but with slightly muffled tone. Output at 10% distortion, 0.8 watt. This set had its chassis connected to one side of the power line, thereby involving a high degree of shock hazard. Had it not been for this, set would have been eligible for a higher rating. No Underwriters' label found. **2**

LIMITATIONS of space made it necessary to omit a part of the information on radio receivers and radio-phonographs which had been intended to be included in the November 1946 BULLETIN report on table models and radio-phonographs. The following brief report presents a group of *C* listings of table-model receivers which had to be held over for this issue, with a *Zenith* ac-dc-battery portable and two radio-phonograph combinations. (On the two radio-phonographs, there was space for only very brief, condensed ratings in the November BULLETIN.)

Sentinel, Model 293W (Sentinel Radio Corp., Evanston, Ill.) $28.50. 6 tubes. Well-made brown plastic cabinet. Had tone control. Parts, workmanship, and ease of servicing all better than average. Sensitivity and selectivity very good, aided by good quality of certain components. Approximate audio range, 140 to 2500 cycles (unusually low). Acoustic quality judged satisfactory. Output at 10% distortion, 0.6 watt. This set had its chassis connected to one side of the power line, involving a high degree of shock hazard. Otherwise set would have been eligible for a higher rating. No Underwriters' label found. **2**

UST Clearsonic, Model 5A16 (RL 2001) (United States Television Mfg. Co., N.Y.C.) $26.95. 5 tubes. Leatherette covered light wooden cabinet. Had no tuning condenser. Used instead permeability-tuned coils, a not undesirable method, if properly engineered. Parts and workmanship about average, used good speaker. Ease of servicing good. Sensitivity and selectivity poor—code and short-wave interference noted. Approximate audio range 150 to 3000 cycles (too low). Acoustic quality judged satisfactory, but treble was somewhat accentuated. Output at 10% distortion, 0.8 watts. This set had its chassis connected to one side of the power line, thereby involving a high degree of shock hazard. No Underwriters' label found. **2**

DeWald, Model A-501 or A-502 (DeWald Radio Mfg. Corp., 438 Lafayette St., New York 3) $31.40. 5 tubes. White molded plastic cabinet with desirably thick walls, but of a material considered less durable than bakelite. Parts, workmanship, and ease of servicing considered average. Sensitivity poor, selectivity fair—interference from code and police signals was noted. Approximate audio range 180 to 3500 cycles (fair). Acoustic qualities judged good. Output at 10% distortion, 0.8 watt. This set had its chassis connected to one side of the power line, thereby involving a high degree of shock hazard. No Underwriters' label found. **3**

Telicon, Model 12R (Telicon Corp., 851 Madison Ave., New York 21) $63.10. Wooden cabinet. 7 tubes. Had 8-in. (large) speaker, tone control, and poorly performing short-wave facilities. Parts and workmanship, about average; ease of servicing, good. Sensitivity and selectivity poor. Spurious responses (interference from code and other signals) found in excessive amounts. Had noticeable hum. Approximate audio range 120 to 3500 cycles (fair). Acoustic quality judged good. Output at 10% distortion, 1.5 watts. This set had its

chassis connected to one side of the power line, involving a high degree of shock hazard. No Underwriters' label found. 3

* * *

AC-DC-Battery Portable

A. Recommended

Transoceanic Portable, Model 8 G 005 YT (Zenith Radio Corp., Chicago) $87.50. Combination "three-way" portable, operating on a-c or d-c house current, or batteries. "Airplane luggage" style case covered with Dupont *Fabricoid*. 8 tubes. Had whip antenna and two loop antennas. Used desirable tuned r.f. amplifier and had facilities for reception on 5 short-wave bands. Had tone control, and push-button band switches. Parts and workmanship good, set and case "tropicalized" to resist moisture and fungus growth. Ease of servicing satisfactory. Sensitivity and selectivity on both broadcast and short-wave bands very good, due in part to tuned r.f. amplifier. Automatic volume control action very good. Approximate audio range 150 to 2500 cycles (too low). Acoustic quality judged good for small receiver. Audio output at 10% distortion, 0.55 watts. When operated from power lines, electrical safety (shock hazard) satisfactory—had leakage current from chassis to ground of 2 milliamperes. When used as portable receiver, had low battery drain (long battery life) due to type of tubes used. Price of three batteries, about $5 retail. This set was sturdily made, well engineered, and should give good reception for news, etc., in almost any location. Bore Underwriters' label. 3

* * *

Two Radio-Phonograph Combinations

B. Intermediate

General Electric, Model 326 (General Electric Co., Bridgeport, Conn.) $197.90. 6-tube superheterodyne, with one additional tube in phonograph preamplifier. Very well made cabinet of "period" design. Chassis was relatively small, comparable in size with the chassis of pre-war table-model radio receivers (this is characteristic of a large number of post-war console-type receivers). Loop antenna, and provision for using external antenna. Facilities for short-wave reception. Parts of average quality. Workmanship judged good, ease of servicing good. Sensitivity good on both broadcast and short-wave bands. Selectivity fair. Tone control and automatic volume control action satisfactory. Had three-position tone control, the first and second position of which were apparently identical, when phonograph section was used. Set showed tendency to go into oscillation when not tuned to station. Approximate audio (acoustical) range 80 to 5300 cycles (good). Audio output at 10% distortion about 3.5 watts maximum, which would not be adequate for a large room or for some listeners. In the low bass region (where considerable output power is needed) set would deliver to the speaker only about 1½ watts of electrical power, at 10% distortion. This disadvantage was offset somewhat, however, by the relatively high efficiency of the loud-speaker (which was somewhat higher than is usual). Acoustic quality on listening test judged good, but the bass was somewhat distorted. Electrical safety adequate. Bore Underwriters' label. ¶Phonograph section of the unit used the *GE* "Variable Reluctance" pickup reported in the November Bulletin, with the *Seeburg* automatic record changer. (The *Seeburg* changer takes either 10-inch or 12-inch records, but not mixed sizes.) Reproduction of records judged satisfactory, but some lack of treble response was evident. (See discussion of performance of this pickup in the November Bulletin.) Record changer satisfactory except for location of control lever, which was such as to cramp the hand and make phonograph somewhat difficult to operate. The phonograph switch did not cut off the radio completely when the equipment was operated as a phonograph, and hence radio programs could be heard faintly through the phonograph music at times. 2

Zenith, Model 12H090 (Zenith Radio Corp., 6001 Dickens Ave., Chicago 39) List price, $288. Superheterodyne with 12 tubes, including rectifier and tuning eye tubes. Loop antenna, and provision for external antenna. Unit includes FM and AM tuners, power supply, amplifier, phonograph preamplifier. Visual tuning indicator. Cabinet of 5/16-inch plywood, reinforced by heavier material, which vibrated at a number of frequencies, an effect that was particularly pronounced, because of the "low-frequency boost" in the audio amplifier. Quality of reproduction on FM far superior to that on AM. Sensitivity on AM broadcast band, excellent; fair on short wave. Selectivity, excellent. No spurious responses of consequence. Considerable distortion in speaker, and although amplifier in the main performed quite well, as measured, reproduction on listening test did not seem satisfactory, having a flat quality. (There was excessive speaker response around 3000 cycles.) Approximate electrical response range, 60 to 5000 cycles (good); acoustical range (as delivered by the loud-speaker), 60 to 4000 cycles. Maximum "undistorted" power output, 6.7 watts, rather good as today's sets run. Maximum output at high distortion, 10.2 watts (good). Substantially free from shock hazard (leakage current only 0.3 ma.). Performance judged not good, if price is considered and if compared with pre-war receivers; however, the set would be rated favorably if considered solely on the basis of today's production of radio receivers in its price class. ¶Record-changer apparently well built; pickup with exceptionally low needle-pressure, 0.6 to 0.7 oz. (desirable, as tending greatly to reduce wear on records and for other reasons). Semi-permanent (metallic) needle. Direct needle noise very greatly reduced below the usual amount, and audible needle scratch level as heard from the loud-speaker, very low. A detailed test made of the performance of the pickup and its associated preamplifier, from the standpoint of distortion, range of electrical response, etc., appeared in the November Bulletin. Tone control action, satisfactory. Automatic volume control action, good. Tuning range 500 to 1600 kc., 9 to 12 mc.; FM 42 to 49 mc., 88 to 108 mc. Tuning, manual and 5 push buttons. Parts of average quality. Workmanship: Cabinet, poor; chassis, average. Accessibility for servicing, not satisfactory. 3

Can Openers

A CAN OPENER is an indispensable tool in the kitchen, even for housewives who do not use a great many canned foods. Though some good can openers are inexpensive, a number of poor ones are high-priced; as often as not the kitchen can opener is badly selected for the job it is to do.

Essentially, the job to be done is to open, easily and safely, cans of almost any shape. A primary requirement is that the opener shall not drop particles of metal inside the can. It should not leave a jagged edge at the top of the can. To be most convenient, the can opener should be easy to clean, and it should operate with the least practicable effort. The cutting edge should be easily sharpened, or it should be replaceable easily, and at small cost.

A poorly designed can opener can be a hazard to the user. The old-fashioned, knife-blade-lever type, with which the user gradually inches his way around the can after punching a hole to start operations, leaves a jagged edge that is especially dangerous. Openers with sharp-edged cutting disks or wheels are much to be preferred to the can openers using a simple stationary knife.

Even with the best can openers, the cutter needs to be replaced from time to time. A dull edge forms sharp and straight or curled bits of sheet metal which are frequently dropped inside the can into the food, and as often as not would not be noticed except by a person of very good eyesight. Care should also be taken to clean thoroughly and periodically the cutting edge to prevent the accumulation of food residues, which may, in the type of opener with a cutting disk, keep the wheel from turning and so impair the efficiency of the tool.

In opening cans, the opener should always be started at a point just *past* the seam of the can and should be stopped just before it reaches this point. If allowed to run through the seam, the opener will often cut off jagged bits of tin that are somewhat larger or more numerous than ordinary; these of course will often get into the food.

The can openers tested had three different methods of operation. In the most common, Type I, the cutting wheel is free to revolve, "on its own," and the operating handle is directly connected to the toothed wheel which forces the can to rotate against the cutting wheel. The can openers using a stationary knife instead of a cutting wheel, also are similar in operation to Type I. In Type II, the cutting wheel and the toothed drive wheel are driven, together, by the operating handle. This type was judged not to be too satisfactory and was hard to turn. In Type III the handle turns the toothed driving wheel that rotates the can, and through a gear, turns the sharp-edged cutting disk also. In this type which is satisfactory, but in the samples available was somewhat harder to turn than Type I, *both* the cutting wheel and the toothed wheel are positively driven by toothed gears.

The openers were tested on round cans (about 3¼ inches in diameter) only, since round

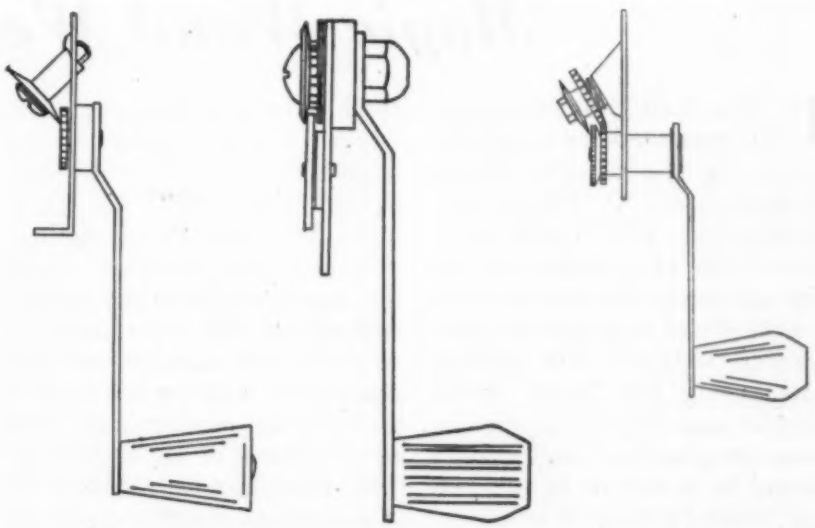

Figure I Figure II Figure III

cans undoubtedly constitute the great majority of the cans that the average user will have to deal with. Where no comment regarding bits of metal dropped into the cans appears in the listings, openers dropped only very minute bits of metal, or practically none, into the cans. The openers rated *A* all were judged to be of good and practical design.

The cheap, poorly made can openers of the kind commonly sold in five-and-ten-cent stores were not included in this report as they have consistently been found to be unsatisfactory.

A. Recommended

Sears (Sears-Roebuck's Cat. No. 11—4025) $1.74, plus postage. Wall-mounted (Type III). Workmanship, good. Ease of operation, good. **2**

Dazey, Model 500 (Dazey Corp., St. Louis) $5.50. Heavy-duty, designed to be fastened to a table (Type I). Workmanship, good. Ease of operation, very good. Well suited for use in a large home or lunchroom. **3**

Smoothcut De Luxe (Regina Corp., Rahway, N. J.) $3.45. Wall-mounted (Type I). Workmanship, very good. Ease of operation, very good. Held the opener very rigidly in place on the wall. **3**

B. Intermediate

Edlund Junior, No. 5 (Edlund Co., Burlington, Vt.) 46c. Used in the hand, not wall-mounted. Similar to Type I. Workmanship, good. Ease of operation, good, except that it was somewhat difficult to remove from can after opening. Cutting blade of fixed-knife type. **1**

Dazey Senior, Model 60 (Dazey Corp.) $1.59. Wall-mounted (Type I). Workmanship, good. Ease of operation, very good, but rigidity only fair. **2**

Can-O-Mat, Cat. No. DL145 (Rival Mfg. Co., Kansas City, Mo.) Enamel and chromium-plated model, $4.98. Wall-mounted (Type I). Workmanship, very good. Ease of operation, good. Rigidity, only fair. Sturdy construction. Mechanism enclosed within a metal case and hence protected from dust. The case was provided with oil-soaked pads inside, to assure proper lubrication of moving parts. Due to design of this opener, which utilizes one crank for performing both puncturing and cutting operations, there is a lag of approximately 1.5 inches between the spot where the can is inserted in the opener and the place where the cutting wheel actually punctures the metal and cutting starts. This may bother some users until they get used to it but is not judged to be a defect of any particular importance. The cutting wheel on one sample tested was so brittle that parts of the sharp edge chipped off leaving the wheel dull after less than 20 cans had been opened. The cutting wheel of another sample examined after a longer use test seemed to be satisfactory in this respect. **3**

C. Not Recommended

Blue Streak (Turner-Seymour Mfg. Co., Torrington, Conn.) 50c. Used in the hand. Similar to Type III. Workmanship, fair. Ease of operation, fair. Cutting wheel is gear driven. An unusual type in the method by which it cut the can. Instead of cutting out the lid inside the rim, it cut off the upper part below the rim and including the lid, and left a sharp, wavy edge. Seems a rather unsatisfactory working principle. **1**

Quintuplet 5 in 1 (Cahil Mfg. Co., 611 Broadway, New York 12) $1.69. Can be used as wall-mounted or hand type. Similar to Type I. Workmanship, fair. Ease of operation, fair. Cutting blade of fixed-knife type. Dropped curled bits of metal as long as ¼ inch into can. **2**

Rival Standard (Rival Mfg. Co., 15th & Wabash Ave., Kansas City, Mo.) $1.49. Wall-mounted (Type II). Workmanship, poor (considerable play in cutting wheel bearing). Ease of operation, poor; very hard to turn, and support not satisfactorily rigid. Dropped a few bits of metal into can. **2**

Magic Wand Welder

In CR's April 1946 BULLETIN, CR presented the results of tests on the *Magic Wand Welder*, Model A1 (Patent Specialties Inc., 4020 Tenth Ave., New York 34), carried out for CR and under its direction by a skilled and experienced commercial welder. His opinion after using the *Magic Wand Welder* was that the appliance was not practical, and that it would be found to be of little use around a farm or home except for the lightest work on steel. The manufacturer of the *Magic Wand Welder*, being himself, naturally, highly skilled in the use of his appliance, felt that the judgment was too severe; however, it was not surprising that any welder trained on and accustomed to working with standard welding equipment would come to such a conclusion regarding the lack of usefulness of the appliance. The manufacturer offered to demonstrate that he could do with his product everything that had been claimed for it in the way of soldering, welding, and brazing light work, and an opportunity was afforded him to demonstrate its capacities. He did show a remarkable skill in the use of the appliance, and was able even to weld over a hole about ¼ inch in diameter in a thin aluminum saucepan. The average home handyman would probably not be able to carry out such an operation, and could hardly expect to match the skills of the appli-

ance's manufacturer, who, as already noted, had become very adept in the use of his own device.

Under the manufacturer's direction (which was by no means the same as trying to learn the art from a printed direction sheet) two members of CR's staff were taught, in a few minutes' time, to braze pieces of steel satisfactorily, and to do a fair job of welding. As a result of this further study, it was CR's opinion that while the average home handyman could, under proper instruction (or lacking such instruction, by dint of repeated patient trials), learn to do satisfactory brazing and soldering, a good deal of practice and many failures would be needed before a satisfactory welding job could be done. On the basis of this reconsideration of the appliance, and providing its use is confined to a special circuit safe for more than 15 amperes, and it is not used on the regular 15 ampere house circuit, it is believed that it might warrant a *B* rather than a *C* rating for anyone who would be in a position to try it out for the necessary period, or better still, learn to operate it under the direction of a person who had already acquired skill in its use after first taking instruction from a qualified representative of the manufacturer of the appliance.

Since the above was written there has been made available to Consumers' Research, information on the general safety of home welding equipment from the standpoint of the loads which the units put on house wiring, and this strongly confirms CR's view regarding the undesirability of consumer use of such equipment. According to a bulletin of the Rural Electric Equipment Council, North Central Electrical Industries, Minneapolis: "The sale and use of cheap unapproved, homemade or 'make your own' welders should be discouraged or prohibited. Such electric welders may at best be dangerous toys. . . . While there are some small low priced welders of the transformer type which may be of approved construction, the limitations of these welders should be clearly stated by the manufacturer and seller with special reference to safety measures in their use. . . . Resistance type welders are not recommended for farm or general purpose use. . . . No welder having an input rating of more than 12 amperes at 110 volts shall be equipped for use, or used, on 110 volt outlets or circuits. Electric welders having a primary input of more than 12 amperes shall be equipped with a special 3 pole polarized plug for connection to a 220 volt 3 wire circuit. . . . All electric welders should be approved construction as evidenced by the Underwriters label or other competent authority. . . . Instructions should warn users NOT to disconnect welders by pulling out the receptacle cord or plug in case of 'freezing.' . . . a disconnecting switch of ample size must be a part of the welder, or separately installed as required by the N. E. Code."

Approved welding equipment will carry indication of its approval by the Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc., on the welder itself. This approval is a minimum requirement to insure proper construction to minimize fire and shock hazards.

Automatic Toasters

AFTER trying for a long period to purchase automatic toasters for test, three (*Knapp-Monarch*, 22A-500-A, *Proctor Dual Automatic*, 1472, and *Toastmaster*, 1B12) were finally obtained. It was expected that a full report on these could be published in this BULLETIN.

The toasters were tested for electrical leakage and given the standard 900-volt proof-voltage test. It was planned to measure the temperature of parts likely to be touched by the hand and to perform a use-test with toasting adjustments set at various positions on all three toasters, but unfortunately, the test samples of both the *Proctor* and the *Toastmaster* toasters failed the proof-voltage test. Since one element of each of these two toasters became open-circuited as a result, it was impossible to carry on further tests, and preliminary results of the full test can be given only on the *Knapp-Monarch*, at this time.

A. Recommended

Knapp-Monarch, No. 22A-500-A (Knapp-Monarch Co., St. Louis) $14.95. Maximum current leakage in the humidified condition did not exceed the permissible limit. Successfully withstood proof-voltage test. Temperature of all parts which might be touched and of table top directly beneath the toaster well below accepted limit of 150°F. Six pairs of slices of bread were toasted at each of 3 heat positions—1 (lowest), D (highest), and No. 4 (moderately high heat). Toasting, requiring 1 minute 10 seconds to 1 minute 47 seconds, was satisfactorily uniform but some burning occurred at the highest setting, after 5 successive sets of slices had been toasted.

Off the Editor's Chest

[*Continued from page 2*]

This general attitude that price controls were to be used not solely for the purpose of assuring fair distribution of war-scarce commodities to consumers at lower income levels and to control inflation, but for other and unpublicized ends, was reflected in a letter to the New York Times last spring—*after* the end of the war—by an OPA regional price board executive who wrote: "Like many other examples of social progress, the time for price control has arrived, and no arguments can dispel that towering economic reality. Our most profitable course is so to design price control that, like all other accepted social controls, it will yield greater freedom because of our having it."

Since at that particular juncture the OPA was at a critical point of its existence and facing a tough battle for the extension of its legal life by Congress, top-level OPA executives were quick to deny that this expression represented official thinking. As the Saturday Evening Post shrewdly observed, however, the gentleman represented "at least a fraction of the rank-and-file OPA mind when idling along on the stream of consciousness." And only a few months ago OPA executives were heard to say that price controls must go on indefinitely, regardless of the ending of the war.

Consumers have been extraordinarily patient in putting up with inconveniences, shortages, and hardships, and dictation by their hired servants in Washington, D.C.; many of the inconveniences and restrictions were due to official bungling and lack of judgment, necessarily tolerated during the war for victory on two fronts. The unmistakable revolt against being compelled to operate under a wartime economy in peacetime, and to do without meat when there was a near-record supply of meat animals on the ranges, just because the bureaucrats thought consumers should not pay more than the decreed price, undoubtedly has played a major part in helping to shake loose the dead hand of bureaucratic control which stifled production and distribution in other lines. There is, for example, plenty of sugar to be had from Cuba if we wish to pay the price for it and arrange for its transportation. There is no good reason at all for the continuance of the wartime stringency of supply. Before they were decontrolled recently, hides for shoe leather were to be had from the Argentine at the world price, which was higher than the ceiling price established by the OPA in the United States; other countries paid the prices that were needed to bring the hides to their markets. The consumer is entitled to decide whether he wants a particular commodity badly enough to pay what it takes to get it. He does not and will not intentionally employ an official to decide this for him.

The OPA had quite misleadingly held out the promise that if it were just given the power to fix ceiling prices consumers would be able to obtain so-called cost-of-living items at reasonable prices. The meat fiasco was final dramatic proof of just how wrong their policies had been. The great majority apparently disagreed with OPA Administrator Porter's statement that stabilization was more important than steaks, or perhaps they did not believe that stabilization was really achieved, without meat on the table once again. We now have reason to hope that a considerable number of consumers are coming to realize what thoughtful folk have long known: that it is impossible to raise wages and costs of transportation greatly, and impose high rates of taxation to pay for destruction of raw materials and finished goods in an extensive and costly war, not to mention supporting great armies and navies, and an enormous extra number (2½ million, approximately) of government officials and employees and pay the huge equipment and rental costs of the numerous wartime control agencies which are still with us as big and profligate as ever, more than a year after hostilities have ended —and at the same time keep prices of commodities down to the 1941 or 1942 level. High prices following a war are one of the chief ways in which a war is paid for. The pouring out of endless sums of "government money" during a war is one of the prime causes of inflation; the way to stop it and reduce prices is not to add more government to run a price control system or revive rationing and priorities, but to *stop government spending* and so reduce the competition for the limited quantities of goods that are available for consumers to buy. These added costs are all reflected in retail prices or deterioration of quality or, in other cases, in the disappearance of an item from the market.

There is no doubt that it is to consumers' best interests to force prices down as soon as possible, not by the King Canute method of a government roll-back order, but by eliminating wastes, unnecessary costs, exercising strict economy in government, and increasing efficiency of production and total output by all the techniques known to modern management. But first and foremost, it is necessary to get production of needed items into high gear. Then by selective choice consumers can effectively work to secure lower prices than those which prevail in a scarcity market. It is to be hoped that they do not again allow themselves to be taken in by the misleading propaganda of self-interested persons in government bureaus, who if they were making the same sort of specious claims in commercial business enterprises would be the subject of Federal Trade Commission action for false and misleading publicity for their product or services, or would become the object of proceedings under the "Blue Sky" security laws of progressive states.

Christmas Tree Lights

AFTER a long absence, a few Christmas tree lighting sets are appearing again in the stores. The sets available for this test followed the form of the old sets fairly closely, but all were improved in one important detail—in place of the rubber and fabric insulation previously used, insulation on the wiring of the new sets was of plastic or synthetic material *closely bonded to the wire.* This could not be readily pulled away from the end of the wire where it was attached to the socket, and so leave the conductor exposed for possible contact with tinsel or other bare metal or the fingers, as could commonly occur with the older sets.

In contrast to many pre-war sets, all of the new sets examined had sockets sufficiently deep to allow the upper edge of the metal lamp base shell to go fully within the socket. A thin strip of conducting material like tinsel could, however, enter the space between the neck of the bulb and the socket and make contact with the live metal shell, a hazard easily prevented by using washers at the neck of the bulbs as was done in one set (see Figure 1).

Some novel types of bulbs have been developed, one of which, the *Noma Bubble-lites*, was included in this study. These were small incandescent lamps to which tubes that contained colored liquid had been cemented. A plastic globe, in two colors surrounded the lamp bulb and the lower portion of the tube. An examination indicated that the bright-hued liquid was a mixture of carbon tetrachloride, ethyl alcohol, water, and a little cane sugar, with color added. A flash test for flammability produced small spurts of flame but did not produce continuous burning. In addition to the liquid, each candle-like tube also contained a short piece of glass rod. When the lights were turned on, heat from the lamp bulbs apparently caused the thin film of liquid beneath the glass rod to boil, sending up vapor bubbles through the liquid.

Series-wired sets are preferable for indoor use; their disadvantage, of course, is that when one lamp burns out, all the other lamps in the string go out also. Nine bulbs, or even ten, in a series string are better than the usual eight.

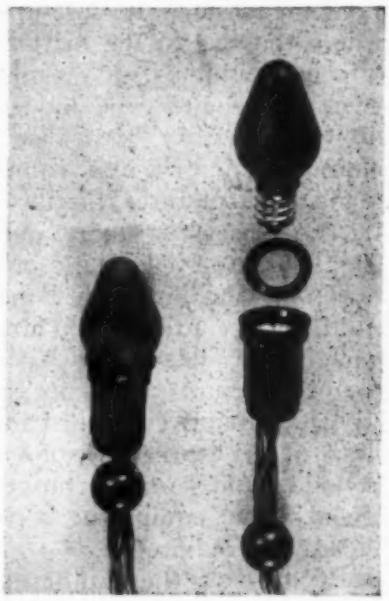

Figure 1
Noma, Decorative Outfit 3415, showing fiber washer used to prevent access of tinsel or other conducting material to socket shell.

Most outdoor sets are of the multiple-wired type. In any handling of lamps and wiring in an outdoor set, it is positively necessary to disconnect the set from the house electric outlet, in order to avoid any possible danger from shock, which is much more likely to occur than under indoor conditions.

Unless otherwise noted, fiber washers were not provided to close the gap between the lamp base and the shell of the socket.

Ratings are cr46.

A. Recommended

Noma, 15 Light Decorative Outfit No. 3415 (Noma Electric Corp., N.Y.C.) $6.40, with *GE* lamps. Multiple-wired, fifteen 120-volt bulbs. Fiber washers provided to close any gap between lamp and socket shell.

B. Intermediate

Gem, Decorative Xmas Lights (No mfr. indicated) $1.90, with *GE* lamps. Series-wired, eight 15-volt bulbs.

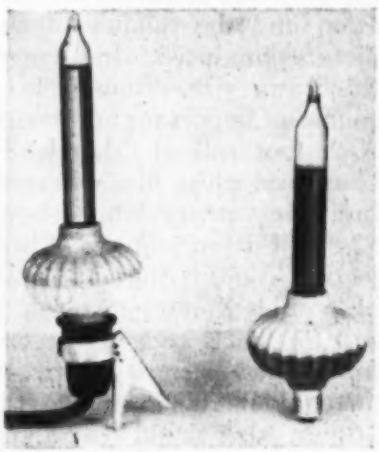

Figure 2
Noma Bubble-lites

Noma Bubble-lites, No. 509. $5 per set. Extra lamps, 2 for $1. Series-wired, nine 15-volt *Bubble-lites* (see text). No fiber washers provided, and although plastic globes partially closed gap between lamp base and socket shell, it was possible for tinsel to enter remaining opening when the lamp base was not assembled properly so as to be concentric with the globe enclosing the lamp bulb. This defect was present in some units.

Noma, Christmas Lights. $1.72, with *GE* lamps. Series-wired, eight 15-volt bulbs. Carton shows UL approval.

C. Not Recommended

Good-lite, Lighting Outfit No. 101 (Good-lite Elec. Co., Bridgeport, Conn.) $3, with *GE* lamps. Multiple-wired, seven 120-volt bulbs. Plug prongs loose, with doubtful contact.

Amateur Motion Picture Equipment

Photo courtesy Bell & Howell Co.
Filmo Sportster

IN purchasing motion picture equipment the first question that must be decided is whether to buy 8 mm. or 16 mm. equipment. The two main factors in deciding between the two sizes are economy of operation and the quality of the pictures produced. In favor of the 8 mm. size, economy is of course an important argument. A 25-foot roll of "double 8" black and white film will cost, including processing, about $2.50. Fifteen minutes of projection would require four rolls of "double 8" film at a cost of $10 for black and white; $15 for *Kodachrome*. By contrast, an equivalent showing in the 16 mm. size would cost about $27 for black and white or $35 for *Kodachrome* if purchased in 100-foot rolls. Thus it will cost approximately two and a half to three times as much for film for 16 mm. as it would for 8 mm. for the same length of projection time. Most people of small or moderate income feel that this high cost of operating 16 mm. equipment places it beyond their reach and they thus have the choice of taking 8 mm. equipment or doing without home movies. (Even the cost of operating 8 mm. equipment is high compared to that of still photography.)

As to quality, it is CR's experience that only exceptionally good 8 mm. equipment is capable of producing movies that, as projected, can compare favorably with *even mediocre* 16 mm. equipment.

In an 8 mm. motion picture frame the ratio of grain size to image size (the factor that makes for "coarseness" of the projected picture) is so great that definition is impaired, and the finest lens cannot produce a satisfactorily sharp image. For that reason only close-ups, where the size of the pictures of people, animals, etc., is relatively large, are even moderately satisfactory. It is also a characteristic of 8 mm. equipment that pictures produced by the finest cameras are only slightly better than those produced by mediocre ones, and moderately-priced 16 mm. cameras produce more satisfactory pictures than do the very highest-priced 8 mm. cameras. Thus expenditure of any considerable sums of money upon 8 mm. equipment is decidedly not advised.

Because of these inherent shortcomings, no 8 mm. motion picture camera is rated higher than *B. Intermediate*. The ratings which follow are based upon the apparent relative mechanical quality of the cameras, and upon the sharpness of the image. Ratings are in order of estimated quality of the cameras.

8 mm. Cameras

B. Intermediate

Filmo Sportster (Bell & Howell Co., Chicago) $99.69, including Federal excise tax. Taylor, Taylor & Hobson *Mytal Anastigmat* f:2.5 lens of 12½ mm. focal length. Fixed focus. A simple and effective mounting permits interchanging lenses. Can be operated at 16, 32, 48, or 64 frames per second. Motor runs about 5 ft. of film for each full winding, shutting off automatically and positively with no tendency to slow down, when rewinding is required. Camera is easy to load; closing the door closes film gate. Ran with exceptional smoothness. Quality of lens somewhat better than that of other 8 mm. cameras tested. Mechanical quality and finish excellent. **2**

Cine-Kodak Eight-25 (Eastman Kodak Co., Rochester, N.Y.) $54.55, including Federal excise tax. *Kodak Anastigmat* f:2.7 lens of 13 mm. focal length. Fixed focus. Can be

Photo courtesy Eastman Kodak Co.
Cine-Kodak Eight-25

operated at 16 frames per second only. Motor runs about 5 ft. of film for each full winding. Finder forms part of the handle of the camera; this is not considered objectionable except that perhaps it may require more frequent cleaning. Definition of lens rated second to that on *Filmo Sportster*. Camera ran fairly smoothly. **1**

Cine-Kodak Magazine 8, Model 90

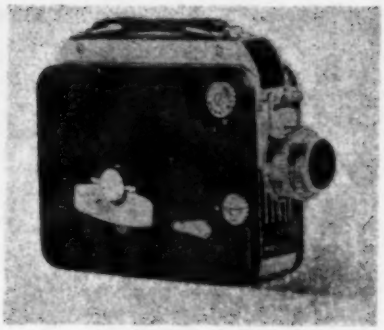

Photo courtesy Eastman Kodak Co.

Cine-Kodak Magazine 8

(Eastman Kodak Co.) $126.55, including Federal excise tax. *Kodak Anastigmat* f:1.9 lens of 13 mm. focal length. Focuses from 2 ft. to infinity. Had provision for interchanging lenses, including means for adjusting finder to lenses of different focal lengths. Two pointers in finder field provide for parallax correction at distances of 2 and 4 feet. Can be operated at 16, 24, 32, or 64 frames per second. Motor runs about 12 ft. of film for each full winding. Quality of lens below that of the *Filmo Sportster* and *Cine-Kodak Eight-25*. Camera ran with exceptional smoothness. Finish and workmanship were excellent. Magazine feature makes loading much more convenient than with cameras using spools. The magazines are only slightly more expensive than film in rolls, but use of this camera is limited to *Kodak* film. **3**

Revere, Model 88 (Revere Camera Co., Chicago) $70.10, including Federal excise tax. *Wollensak* f:2.5 coated lens of 13 mm. focal length. Fixed focus. Can be operated at 8, 12, 16, 24, or 32 frames per second. Motor runs about 3 ft. per winding. Quality of lens judged

Photo courtesy Revere Camera Co.

Revere, Model 88

about equal to that of the *Cine-Kodak Magazine 8*. Considerable vibration from motor, and one was aware that appreciable friction was present; this might indicate probability of early wear of moving parts. **2**

C. Not Recommended

Bolex L8 (American Bolex Co., 521 Fifth Ave., New York 17) Over $152, including Federal excise tax. *Kern-Paillard* f:2.8 *Yvar* lens of 12½ mm. focal length. Focuses from 9 inches to infinity. Operates at 16 frames per second only. Motor runs about 6 ft. per winding. Operates unevenly and with noticeable vibration. Quality of lens poorer than for cameras listed under *B. Intermediate*. Focusing mount is in such a position that unless care is exercised, focus is changed inadvertently while camera is operating, considered quite a serious defect. Leather covering not firmly affixed to camera. Mechanical construction mediocre, which was disappointing in view of excellent construction of the larger pre-war *Bolex* cameras. **3**

Keystone, Model K-8 (Keystone Manufacturing Co., Boston) $55.55, including Federal excise tax. *Wollensak* f:2.5 coated lens of 13 mm. focal length (same as that on *Revere*, Model 88). Fixed focus. Can be operated at 12, 16, or 48 frames per second. Frame view-finder on outside of camera, in addition to the usual finder in the body of the camera. Quality of lens only fair; definition was poorer than that of similar lens on *Revere*, possibly because it was less well fitted. Operated unevenly and with considerable noise and vibration. When mounted on a tripod and operated, the frames were not of uniform density, indicating unsteady operation as a cause of uneven exposures. Finish and workmanship poor. **1**

★★★

Miniature Cameras

A. Recommended

Kodak 35, Range Finder Model (Eastman Kodak Co., Rochester, N. Y.) $78.80, including Federal excise tax. *Kodak Anastigmat Special* f:3.5 lens of 50 mm. focal length. Takes pictures about 24 x 36 mm. (1 x 1-3/8 inches) on 35 mm. film in standard 18 or 36 exposure rolls. *Kodamatic* shutter with rated speeds of 1/200, 1/100, 1/50, 1/25, 1/10, time, and bulb. Shutter had provision for synchronizing with the *Kodak* flash unit. Advancing film automatically

A Report on Four Post-War Cameras

cocks shutter for next exposure. Coupled range-finder of the desirable split-field type, operated by a knurled disk and focusing from 4 ft. to infinity. Range-finder and view-finder had separate windows. Quality of lens good—considered about equivalent to f:3.5 *Tessar* of similar focal length. Shutter speeds, with the exception of the 1/200, were approximately proportional, the 1/200 second was somewhat slow. Range-finder accurate but worked hard in one spot, presumably as a result of failure to make final adjustment at the factory. Camera was bulky (of approximately same bulk and weight as *Contax*). Like all cameras of its type, it should be used only in an "eveready" carrying case to avoid possibility of damage to the lens

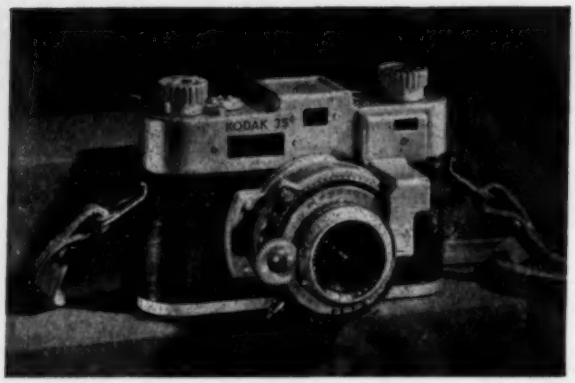

Photo courtesy Eastman Kodak Co.

Kodak 35, Range Finder Model

which was unprotected. This camera appears to be substantially equivalent to the pre-war model, perhaps because it was made throughout the war for the armed forces. Judged to be a far superior camera to the *Perfex* and *Argus C3* (reported in the August 1946 Bulletin) even when the latter cameras may be free from defects of assembly. **2**

C. Not Recommended

Clarus, Model MS-35 (Clarus Camera Mfg. Co., 1554 Nicollet Ave., Minneapolis 4) $116.25, including Federal excise tax. Pictures about 24 x 36 mm. (1 x 1-3/8 inches) on 35 mm. film in standard 18 or 36 exposure rolls. Test negatives more out of focus than with any of the five post-war cameras with coupled range-finders so far tested. Further details omitted for lack of space will appear in a future Bulletin. **3**

Vokar I (Vokar Corp., Dexter, Mich.) $85.95, including Federal excise tax. *Vokar* f:2.8 coated lens of 50 mm. focal length. Same picture size and film as *Clarus*. Quality of lens unsatisfactory; definition poor. Film winding mechanism defective. General construction poor, and camera was heavy and clumsy. Results obtained with this camera inferior to what could be obtained with a good box camera. As with *Clarus*, details omitted, to appear later. **3**

Twin-Lens Reflex

B. Intermediate

Ciro-flex, Model B (Ciro Inc., Detroit) $73.04, including Federal excise tax. *Wollensak Velostigmat* f:3.5 coated lens of 85 mm. focal length and focusing lens of about the same speed (latter also appears to have some coated surfaces). Takes 12 pictures each 2¼ inches square on No. 120 roll film. *Wollensak Alphax* automatic shutter with rated speeds of 1/200, 1/100, 1/50, 1/25, 1/10, time, and bulb. Over-all dimensions including lenses, all protruding knobs, etc., 5⅞ inches high, 3⅞ inches wide, 4½ inches deep. Focusing on conventional ground glass by moving the camera front, which carries both lenses; operation by means of a cam working against spring pressure giving smooth control. Folding magnifier in hood. By folding back the center panel of the front section of the hood, direct vision finding is possible; because of parallax this would not be satisfactory for near-by objects. Had depth of field scale on focusing knob. Shiny metal diaphragm leaves, unblackened brass cam, and bright metal nut holding tripod socket are all inside camera where they might be sources of reflection to film surface. Lens quality fairly good, below that of a *Tessar* but better than that of the *Kodak Anastigmat* used on the *Kodak Reflex* (discussed in Aug. '46 Bul.). Relative shutter speeds were reasonably good, although an automatic shutter is in general considered inferior to a setting shutter. This one (*Wollensak Alphax*) was quite satisfactory initially. (How well it will stand usage is not yet known.) Film was scratched longitudinally. This appeared to be caused by one of the rollers which did not turn, a defect of factory inspection. The *Ciro-flex* is considered superior to the *Kodak Reflex* because of its better lens, which is the most important part of a camera. Price almost double that of pre-war *Ciro-flex*, which it closely resembles except for the lens coating, which could have added only a little to the cost. The *Ciro-flex*, Model B, is, however, considerably more reasonably priced than the *Kodak Reflex*. **2**

All of Us at Consumers' Research Extend Christmas Greetings and Good Wishes to All Our Readers and Friends

Photo courtesy Ciro, Inc.

Ciroflex, Model B

Ratings of Motion Pictures

THIS section aims to give critical consumers a digest of opinion from a wide range of motion picture reviews, including the motion picture trade press, leading newspapers and magazines—some 19 different periodicals in all. The motion picture ratings which follow thus do not represent the judgment of a single person, but are based on an analysis of critics' reviews.

The sources of the reviews are:

Box Office, Chicago Daily Tribune, The Christian Century, Cue, Daily News (N.Y.), *The Exhibitor, Harrison's Reports, Mademoiselle, Motion Picture Herald, National Legion of Decency List, Newsweek, New York Herald Tribune, New York Times, Parents' Magazine, Release of the D.A.R. Preview Committee, Successful Farming, Time, Variety* (weekly), and *Unbiased Opinions of Current Motion Pictures* which includes reviews by the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the American Legion Auxiliary, National Film Music Council, and others.

The figures preceding the title of the picture indicate the number of critics who have been judged to rate the film A (recommended), B (intermediate), and C (not recommended).

Audience suitability is indicated by "A" for adults, "Y" for young people (14-18), and "C" for children, at the end of each line.

Descriptive abbreviations are as follows:

adv—adventure
biog—biography
c—in color (Technicolor, Cinecolor, or Magnacolor)
car—cartoon
com—comedy
cri—crime and capture of criminals
doc—documentary
dr—drama
fan—fantasy
hist—founded on historical incident
mel—melodrama
mus—musical
mys—mystery
nov—dramatization of a novel
rom—romance
soc—social-problem drama
trav—travelogue
war—dealing with the lives of people in wartime
wes—western

A	B	C		
—	—	4	**Accomplice**	*cri-mel A*
—	2	2	**Alias Billy the Kid**	*wes AYC*
1	6	6	**Angel on My Shoulder**	*fan A*
9	9	—	**Anna and the King of Siam**	*dr A*
—	4	4	**Avalanche**	*cri-mel AYC*
—	7	7	**Bachelor's Daughters, The**	*mus-com A*
1	7	3	**Badman's Territory**	*wes AYC*
—	4	5	**Bamboo Blonde, The**	*mus-war-rom A*
—	5	5	**Bedlam**	*dr A*
—	4	4	**Below the Deadline**	*mel A*
—	2	2	**Beware**	*mus-com A*
1	8	6	**Big Sleep, The**	*cri-mel A*
—	7	6	**Black Angel**	*mus-mel A*
—	6	4	**Black Beauty**	*dr YC*
—	1	5	**Blonde for a Day**	*mys A*
—	4	3	**Blondie Knows Best**	*com AYC*
—	2	1	**Blue Sierra**	*dr-c AYC*
1	12	2	**Blue Skies**	*mus-biog-c A*
—	3	3	**Bowery Bombshell**	*mel AYC*
1	6	6	**Boys' Ranch**	*dr AYC*
4	10	—	**Brief Encounter**	*dr A*
—	2	2	**Bringing Up Father**	*com AY*
—	—	3	**Brute Man, The**	*cri-mel A*
4	11	3	**Caesar and Cleopatra**	*dr-c A*
2	10	3	**Canyon Passage**	*wes-c A*
1	10	5	**Centennial Summer**	*mus-com-c A*
—	4	—	**Chase, The**	*cri-mel A*
—	2	2	**Child of Divorce**	*dr A*
2	9	4	**Claudia and David**	*com AYC*
1	9	3	**Cloak and Dagger**	*war-mel A*
3	10	2	**Cluny Brown**	*com A*
—	7	6	**Cockeyed Miracle, The**	*fan A*
—	3	3	**Colorado Serenade**	*mus-wes-c AYC*
—	3	—	**Conquest of Cheyenne**	*wes AYC*
2	7	1	**Courage of Lassie**	*dr-c AYC*
—	2	2	**Cowboy Blues**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	9	5	**Crack-Up**	*cri-mel A*
—	—	3	**Crime Doctor's Manhunt**	*mys-mel A*
—	1	2	**Crime of the Century**	*cri-mel A*
—	6	2	**Criminal Court**	*mus-cri-dr A*
—	1	3	**Cross My Heart**	*cri-mel A*
—	2	7	**Cuban Pete**	*mus-com AYC*
—	4	5	**Danger Woman**	*mel A*
—	2	5	**Dangerous Business**	*cri-mel AYC*
—	—	4	**Dangerous Money**	*mys-mel AYC*
—	3	5	**Dark Alibi**	*mys-mel AYC*
1	10	4	**Dark Corner, The**	*cri-mel A*
—	5	5	**Dark Horse, The**	*com AYC*
1	5	3	**Dark Mirror, The**	*mys-mel A*
—	11	4	**Dead of Night**	*mys-mel A*
—	1	8	**Deadline for Murder**	*cri-mel A*
—	4	2	**Deception**	*dr A*
—	3	4	**Decoy**	*mel A*
—	4	2	**Desert Horseman, The**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	2	6	**Devil's Mask, The**	*mys-mel AY*
—	5	1	**Devil's Playground, The**	*wes AYC*
—	10	3	**Do You Love Me?**	*mus-com-c AY*
—	3	7	**Don't Gamble with Strangers**	*mys-mel A*
—	4	5	**Down Missouri Way**	*mus-com AYC*
—	7	4	**Dressed to Kill**	*mys-mel AYC*
—	2	1	**Driftin' River**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	7	3	**Earl Carroll Sketchbook**	*mus-com A*
1	11	4	**Easy to Wed**	*mus-com-c A*
—	3	—	**Extenuating Circumstances**	*cri-com A*
—	5	2	**Faithful in My Fashion**	*rom A*
—	3	1	**Fool's Gold**	*wes AYC*
—	2	4	**Freddy Steps Out**	*mus-com AY*
—	3	5	**French Key, The**	*mys-mel A*
—	1	2	**Frenzy**	*mys-mel A*
—	6	2	**G.I. War Brides**	*dr A*
—	5	1	**Gallant Bess**	*war-dr-c AYC*
—	2	10	**Gallant Journey**	*dr A*
—	4	2	**Galloping Thunder**	*mus-wes A*
—	1	3	**Gas House Kids**	*mel AYC*
—	5	2	**Gay Blades**	*com AYC*
—	2	2	**Gay Cavalier, The**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	1	3	**Gay Intruders, The**	*war-nov AYC*
—	—	7	**Genius at Work**	*mys-com A*
—	6	1	**Gentleman Joe Palooka**	*com A*
—	—	4	**Gentlemen with Guns**	*wes AYC*
—	1	4	**Ghost of Hidden Valley**	*wes AYC*
—	2	7	**Glass Alibi, The**	*cri-mel A*
—	2	2	**God's Country**	*mel-c AYC*
—	4	4	**Great Day**	*war-dr AYC*
—	3	1	**Gunning for Vengeance**	*wes AYC*
—	2	2	**Haunted Mine, The**	*wes AYC*
—	1	4	**Heading West**	*wes AYC*
1	7	6	**Heartbeat**	*com A*
—	2	3	**Hello Moscow**	*mus-com A*
12	2	2	**Henry V**	*dr-c A*
—	7	2	**Her Adventurous Night**	*com A*
—	6	3	**Her Sister's Secret**	*war-dr A*
—	2	5	**High School Hero**	*mus-com AY*
3	10	3	**Holiday in Mexico**	*mus-com-c AYC*
—	3	3	**Home on the Range**	*mus-wes-c AYC*
—	7	5	**Home Sweet Homicide**	*mys-mel A*
2	1	—	**Hymn of the Nations**	*mus-doc AYC*

A	B	C		
—	3	1	**I Know Where I'm Going**	*dr A*
—	3	8	**If I'm Lucky**	*mus-com A*
—	2	4	**In Fast Company**	*mel AYC*
—	12	2	**In Old Sacramento**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	—	6	**Inner Circle, The**	*cri-mel A*
—	5	6	**Inside Job**	*cri-mel A*
—	—	6	**Invisible Informer**	*cri-mel A*
—	10	2	**It Shouldn't Happen to a Dog**	*com AYC*
—	1	7	**It's Great to be Young**	*mus-com AY*
2	4	6	**I've Always Loved You**	*mus-dr-c A*
—	4	10	**Janie Gets Married**	*com AY*
—	6	1	**Johnny Frenchman**	*war-dr A*
3	6	1	**Jolson Story, The**	*mus-biog-c AY*
2	12	1	**Killers, The**	*cri-mel A*
—	7	4	**Lady Luck**	*com A*
—	3	—	**Lady Surrenders, A**	*rom A*
—	—	3	**Landrush**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	1	6	**Larceny in Her Heart**	*mys-mel AYC*
—	2	6	**Last Crooked Mile, The**	*cri-mel A*
—	2	4	**Little Iodine**	*com A*
—	4	3	**Little Miss Big**	*dr AYC*
1	4	5	**Little Mr. Jim**	*dr A*
—	5	8	**Lover Come Back**	*com A*
7	9	1	**Make Mine Music**	*mus-car AYC*
1	4	—	**Man from Rainbow Valley**	*mus-wes-c AYC*
—	6	1	**Man Who Dared, The**	*cri-mel A*
3	6	1	**Margie**	*com-c AY*
—	—	3	**Missing Lady, The**	*mys-mel A*
1	12	2	**Monsieur Beaucaire**	*mus-com A*
—	4	11	**Mr. Ace**	*dr A*
2	4	1	**My Pal Trigger**	*mus-wes AYC*
1	5	1	**My Darling Clementine**	*wes AYC*
—	6	4	**Mysterious Intruder**	*cri-mel A*
—	3	—	**Navajo Trail, The**	*wes AYC*
—	4	—	**Never Say Goodbye**	*com A*
2	13	2	**Night and Day**	*mus-biog-c A*
1	13	4	**Night in Casablanca, A**	*com A*
1	7	9	**Night in Paradise**	*fan-c A*
—	1	4	**Night Train to Memphis**	*mus-mel A*
—	6	4	**No Leave, No Love**	*mus-com AY*
—	4	3	**Nobody Lives Forever**	*cri-mel A*
1	2	1	**Nocturne**	*mus-mel AY*
8	10	—	**Notorious**	*mys-mel A*
—	5	2	**Notorious Gentleman**	*war-dr A*
—	11	4	**O.S.S.**	*war-mel A*
—	5	9	**Of Human Bondage**	*dr A*
—	3	4	**One Exciting Week**	*mus-com A*
—	5	7	**One More Tomorrow**	*dr A*
—	1	3	**Overland Riders**	*wes AYC*
—	3	5	**Passkey to Danger**	*cri-mel A*
—	5	4	**Perilous Holiday**	*mus-com A*
—	3	5	**Personality Kid**	*com AYC*
—	—	5	**Phantom Thief, The**	*cri-mel A*
—	9	1	**Portrait of a Woman**	*dr A*
—	3	4	**Postmaster's Daughter, The**	*nov A*
—	—	5	**Prairie Badmen**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	1	2	**Prairie Rustlers**	*wes AYC*
—	4	5	**Queen of Burlesque**	*mus-mel A*
2	4	—	**Raider, The**	*war-doc AY*
—	6	1	**Rainbow Over Texas**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	5	3	**Rendezvous 24**	*mys-mel AYC*
—	9	1	**Rendezvous with Annie**	*war-com A*
—	10	3	**Renegades**	*mel-c A*
—	2	4	**Resistance**	*war-mel A*
—	4	3	**Return of Rusty**	*mel AYC*
—	5	1	**Roll On Texas Moon**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	2	1	**Rolling Home**	*dr AYC*
—	8	4	**Runaround, The**	*com AY*
—	3	—	**Rustler's Roundup**	*wes AYC*
—	5	10	**Scandal in Paris, A**	*cri-mel A*
1	7	9	**Searching Wind, The**	*war-dr A*
—	1	4	**Secrets of a Sorority Girl**	*cri-dr A*
—	5	4	**Shadow of a Woman**	*cri-mys A*
—	2	3	**Shadowed**	*mys-mel A*
—	—	3	**Shadows on the Range**	*wes AYC*
—	1	3	**Shadows Over Chinatown**	*mys-mel AYC*
—	11	3	**She Wrote the Book**	*com A*
—	3	—	**Sheriff of Redwood Valley**	*wes AYC*
—	7	—	**Show-Off, The**	*com AYC*
—	—	7	**Sing While You Dance**	*mus-com AYC*
—	1	2	**Singing on the Trail**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	4	3	**Sirocco**	*dr A*
4	7	2	**Sister Kenny**	*biog AYC*
—	2	5	**Slightly Scandalous**	*mus-com AY*
3	12	1	**Smoky**	*mus-dr-c AYC*
—	3	3	**So Dark the Night**	*mel A*
—	13	4	**So Goes My Love**	*com AYC*
—	11	2	**Somewhere in the Night**	*cri-mel A*
—	1	3	**Song of Mexico**	*mus-dr A*
—	1	3	**South of Monterey**	*mus-wes AYC*
1	3	9	**Specter of the Rose**	*dr A*
—	1	4	**Spook Busters**	*com AY*
—	3	5	**Step by Step**	*war-mel A*
—	11	5	**Stolen Life, A**	*dr A*
—	9	3	**Stormy Waters**	*dr A*
—	2	8	**Strange Confession**	*cri-mys A*
—	3	5	**Strange Conquest**	*dr A*
—	—	3	**Strange Holiday**	*mel A*
—	—	5	**Strange Journey**	*mel A*
—	10	7	**Strange Love of Martha Ivers, The**	*cri-mel A*
—	3	3	**Strange Mr. Gregory, The**	*cri-mel A*
—	3	7	**Strange Triangle**	*cri-mel A*
—	2	1	**Strange Woman, The**	*dr A*
4	9	4	**Stranger, The**	*war-mel A*
—	7	—	**Sun Valley Cyclone**	*wes AYC*
—	4	6	**Sunset Pass**	*wes AYC*
2	9	6	**Suspense**	*mus-dr A*
—	2	7	**Swamp Fire**	*mel AYC*
—	—	3	**Temptation**	*cri-mel A*
—	—	4	**Terrors on Horseback**	*wes AYC*
—	2	2	**That Texas Jamboree**	*mus-mel AYC*
—	9	9	**They Were Sisters**	*dr A*
—	11	1	**Three Little Girls in Blue**	*mus-com-c AY*
1	7	3	**Three Wise Fools**	*com AYC*
—	7	7	**Thrill of Brazil, The**	*mus-com A*
2	8	6	**Till the End of Time**	*dr A*
1	6	1	**Time of Their Lives, The**	*com AYC*
—	1	5	**Traffic in Crime**	*mel A*
—	9	3	**Two Guys from Milwaukee**	*com AYC*
—	4	5	**Two Smart People**	*cri-mel A*
1	8	4	**Two Years Before the Mast**	*adv AYC*
—	3	2	**Two-Fisted Stranger**	*wes AYC*
—	3	2	**Under Arizona Skies**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	4	1	**Under Nevada Skies**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	3	4	**Undercover Woman, The**	*cri-mel A*
2	2	1	**Undercurrent**	*mel A*
—	2	6	**Unknown, The**	*mys A*
—	3	5	**Vacation in Reno**	*com A*
—	1	9	**Valley of the Zombies**	*cri-mel A*
—	9	1	**Walls Came Tumbling Down, The**	*mys-mel AY*
3	5	—	**Welldigger's Daughter, The**	*dr A*
—	—	5	**West of the Alamo**	*mus-wes AYC*
—	2	4	**White Tie and Tails**	*com A*
—	3	—	**Wicked Lady, The**	*dr A*
—	—	3	**Wife Wanted**	*cri-mel A*
—	1	7	**Wild Beauty**	*dr AYC*
—	9	3	**Without Reservations**	*com A*
—	—	3	**Youth Aflame**	*dr A*

The Consumers' Observation Post

(Continued from page 4)

WHITE SHIRTS are so hard to find these days that those few that a man has left in his drawer should be pampered. Here are suggestions of one textile expert for adding to their life: The owner should shave often so that tough whiskers around the collar do not abrade it and shorten its life; freshly washed shirts should not be hung on the line to dry on a windy day or when the temperature is so low that they will freeze; don't use heavy starches or bleaches when their use is not necessary.

* * *

GADGETS SOLD TO IMPROVE GASOLINE ECONOMY, to "boost power," to provide "quicker starting," "eliminate carbon deposit," are frequently found at automobile dealers' shops. These are usually devices intended to bleed air into the intake manifold; although they differ in details they all do pretty much the same thing. They may produce better mileage at some sacrifice in car performance. As most cars operate on richer mixtures than are really necessary for good economy, the mixture-leaning device does produce a saving of gasoline, but it is evidently not one which the consumer wants after he has gotten it, for there can be no doubt at all that a great majority of owners want good acceleration far more than they want economical operation. (It might be more accurate to say they want good acceleration, and they are very often unaware that with that must go some loss of economy in miles per gallon of gasoline.) The classic example of this was the failure of a campaign some years ago of a gasoline distributing company which sponsored tests that provided for determining the condition of the gasoline-vapor-air mixture as provided by the carburetor and then arranged for installation of smaller carburetor jets, when needed, to improve gasoline economy. The owners liked the gasoline economy, but did not like the poor accelerating ability, and had a way of bringing their cars back to the service station to have the old jets installed and the old quick get-away and good acceleration restored.

* * *

USED CARS in a populous Midwestern state are reported to have reached the "clunker" stage, yet prices are still holding up. Legitimate dealers claim no bonuses are being paid by car buyers for new cars, yet quite evidently such bonuses are being paid. One man paid $300 over the regular price; another who

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PRICES and quality are again a matter of keen interest to an increasing number of consumers. Fast disappearing are the "hang-the-expense," "we-don't-care-what-it-costs" days. More and more as once-scarce items become available, consumers are taking the opportunity to examine and compare critically different brands and makes.

THAT'S where CR comes in. The new 1946-47 ANNUAL CUMULATIVE BULLETIN, which represents a handy compilation of CR's previous findings on a wide variety of products rated by brand name, provides a convenient guide to the market. It is supplemented each month by the new tests now being reported each month in CONSUMERS' RESEARCH BULLETINS. Your friends will appreciate your thoughtfulness in introducing them to Consumers' Research for Christmas!

had just bought and paid for a car and had it parked on the street in front of the dealer's place, sold it for $500 more than he had just paid for it.

* * *

NEW PRODUCTS: Janie Spot Eraser is a chalk-like stick meant to be used on fabrics to remove spots caused by food, grease, or oil. Examination indicates the product is kaolin, cut or pressed into block form. It has a soapy feel and semi-pearly luster. It is supposed to do its work by being rubbed on the spot and then absorbing the grease; the powder is subsequently brushed off the material. This is apparently the equivalent in its general idea and purpose to a well-known product, Annette's Perfect Cleanser, which has had considerable sale in the past, and possibly still sells widely. Annette's was made of a talc-like powder (probably aluminum silicate), and it contained a small trace of essential oil for odor. The effectiveness of a cleaner of this type is open to serious question. One extension service bulletin, for example, mentions that fuller's earth (a highly absorbent clay consisting largely of hydrous aluminum silicate), meal (such as corn meal), chalk, talc, give best results where the stain is fresh or moist, and the absorbent powder is spread on the spot at once. The action is like that of blotting paper. Another says that these materials work well on freshly made stains such as grease spots, or splashes of salad oil. The method is not always successful if the stain is very large or has become set or dry. Spots made by solid fats such as butter must be melted before they can be absorbed; soft, unglazed paper or blotting paper may be used as the absorbent. In the limited number of cases where absorbents will do the work, they provide a useful method, as they do not wet the material or leave rings as grease solvents are likely to do. When substances of this class are used, new applications should be made as fast as the grease is taken up by the absorbent powder.

Rubber Burn & Gymn Cleaner (Twi-Laq Chemical Co., 25 N. Portland Ave., Brooklyn 1, N.Y.) is sold as a remover for rubber heel marks and dirt from wood floors. The label also recommends it for linoleum and painted concrete floors. The jobber's selling price is about $2.75 to $3 per gallon. Analysis indicated that this product was essentially a soap solution containing some ammonia and naphtha, with pine oil for odor. When a quantity of the cleaner was left upon a varnished surface for some hours or days, it produced a distinct dulling of the finish (as might be expected from its composition); it is doubtful, however, whether this effect on the varnish would be of any practical importance to the user, assuming only occasional use of the product on any given part of the floor, and reasonable care to mop the material off the floor with pure water, as the manufacturer's directions instruct.

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Washington, N. J.

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PHONOGRAPH RECORDS

By Walter F. Grueninger

Please Note: Prices quoted do not include taxes. In the ratings AA indicates highly recommended; A, recommended; B, intermediate; C, not recommended.

TO continue the gift suggestions from the sets praised in this column during 1946 which offer music deemed worthy of repeated hearing—of its kind, of course—those which were rated A or better for interpretation and fidelity are listed. Key: V stands for Victor, C for Columbia, D for Decca, DI for Disc, CA for Capitol, I for International.

CHAMBER & INSTRUMENTAL

- **Bach:** *Goldberg Variations.* V 1002. $6.85
- **Bach:** *Organ Music.* V 1048. $4.85
- **Bach:** *Three Part Inventions.* DI 770. $4.50
- **Bach:** *Violin Sonata in E.* V 1035. $3.85
- **Beethoven:** *Sonata No. 7.* C 604. $4.85
- **Brahms:** *Hungarian Dances.* V 1053. $3
- **Chopin:** *Piano Music.* V 1034. $3.85
- **Debussy:** *Preludes,* Book I. V 1031. $5.75
- *Fritz Kreisler Program.* V 1044. $3
- **Liszt:** *Mefisto Waltz.* V SP11. $2.25
- **Liszt:** *Piano Music.* C 602. $4.85
- **Mozart:** *Quintet* (K 515). C 586. $4.85

VOCAL

- **Bach:** *Cantata No. 78.* V 1045. $4.85
- **Bizet:** *Carmen*—Excerpts. C 607. $5.85
- **Brahms:** *Alto Rhapsody.* V SP13. $2.25
- **Prokofieff:** *Alexander Nevsky.* C 580. $5.85
- **Schubert:** *Songs from Die Schöne Müllerin.* C 615. $8.25
- **Schubert:** *Die Winterreise*—6 Songs. C 587. $3
- **Wagner:** *Die Walküre*—Act III. C 581. $8.85
- **Wagner:** *Lohengrin*—Bridal Chamber Scene. C X261. $2.85
- *Celebrated Operatic Arias.* C 612. $4.85
- *Paris.* C 638. $3.85
- *Russian Operatic Arias.* V 1073. $3.85
- *A Treasury of Grand Opera.* V 1074. $4.85

LIGHT, FOLK, AND MISCELLANEOUS

- *Victor Herbert Melodies.* V 1069. $3.85
- *Jerome Kern Melodies.* V P157. $2.50
- *Music of Jerome Kern.* C 622. $4.85
- **Kern:** *Show Boat Excerpts.* C 611. $5.85
- **Porter:** *Night and Day and Other Hits.* V 1033. $4.85
- *Your Favorite Strauss Waltzes.* CA DB22. $2.50
- **Trenet:** *Six Chansons Francaises.* I 3. $3.50
- *Ballads and Folksongs.* D 407. $3.75
- *Familiar Hymns.* CA DB15. $2.50
- *Benny Goodman Sextet Session.* C 113. $2.75
- *Gypsy Melodies.* I 9. $3.75
- *International Night.* V S44. $3
- *Love Songs.* DI 609. $3
- *By Request.* V 1060. $3
- *South of the Border.* C 593. $3.50
- *Spirituals.* C 610. $3.75
- *Square Dances.* DI 631. $3.15
- *Joe Sullivan Jazz Quartet.* DI 701. $3.75

CHAMBER & INSTRUMENTAL

Bach: *Three Part Inventions.* Erno Balogh (piano). 6 sides. Disc Set 770. $4.50. Fifteen short pieces written for instructive purposes, enjoyed by many connoisseurs as interesting miniatures. Played skillfully, recorded clearly.
Interpretation AA
Fidelity of Recording A

Piano Music of Chopin. Maryla Jonas (piano). 6 sides, Columbia Set 626. $3.85. Poetic, though rather precious, performances of eight short, less important Chopin compositions.
Interpretation A
Fidelity of Recording A

VOCAL

Paris. Lily Pons (soprano). 6 sides, Columbia Set 638. $3.85. A strange kettle of fish, supposedly music "closely associated with Paris." Sung expertly, if not robustly, and well recorded. Included are "April in Paris", "J'Attendrai," "La Marseillaise", "Pizzicato Ballerina", "Ah Fors' E Lui," etc.
Interpretation AA
Fidelity of Recording AA

Russian Opera Arias. Alexander Kipnis (bass). 6 sides, Victor Set 1073. $3.85. Scenes from "Eugen Onegin", "Sadko," "Prince Igor", "Boris Godounoff", "The Roussalka." As an encore: "Song of the Flea," which comes off least effectively, for the other numbers are a pleasure to hear. Anna Leskaya and Ilya Tamarin assist on one side. Excellent recording, though I would prefer more orchestra. **Interpretation AA**
Fidelity of Recording AA

A Treasury of Grand Opera. Toscanini, Warren, Milanov, Swarthout, Albanese, etc. 8 sides, Victor Set 1074. $4.85. Collection of numbers from "Lohengrin", "Pagliacci", "Aida," "Faust", "Carmen", "La Traviata", "Don Giovanni." To the buyer whose favorite personality can do no wrong, the set will prove diversified and delightful. But the experienced collector will recall superior performances of most sides, though recorded with less sheen. **Interpretation A**
Fidelity of Recording AA

LIGHT

Ballads and Folksongs. Burl Ives (folksinger). 8 sides, Decca Set 407. $3.75. First rate performance and recording of "Dublin City," "Cockle Shells," "Venezuela," "The Fox," etc.
Interpretation AA
Fidelity of Recording AA

By Request. James Melton (tenor). 6 sides, Victor Set 1060. $3. A program of Melton's radio audience favorites sung with enthusiasm and recorded well. Included are "The Hills of Home", "Siboney", "Make Believe", "It's a Grand Night for Singing", etc.
Interpretation AA
Fidelity of Recording AA

Victor Herbert Melodies. Dorothy Kirsten (soprano). 6 sides, Victor Set 1069. $3.85. Assets: the opulent voice, commendable style, clear recording of Miss Kirsten. Debits: tendency to rush, clipped phrases, unimpressive arrangements, balance unfavorable to orchestra. Included: "Indian Summer", "Moonbeams", "Romany Life", "Kiss in the Dark," etc.
Interpretation A
Fidelity of Recording A

Jerome Kern Melodies. Al Goodman and His Orchestra and Earl Wrightson (tenor) Mary Martha Briney (soprano) and chorus. 8 sides, Victor Set P-157. $2.50. Competent, workmanlike performance and recording by persons experienced in the idiom. Included are "Why Do I Love You," "Long Ago," "The Touch of Your Hand," "The Song is You," "The Night was Made for Love," etc. **Interpretation A**
Fidelity of Recording A

Square Dances. Paul Hunt and His Rock Candy Mountaineers. 6 sides, Disc Set 631. $3.15. An album without calls that will start fingers and toes tapping. Issued for dancing. Excellent recording. **Interpretation AA**
Fidelity of Recording AA

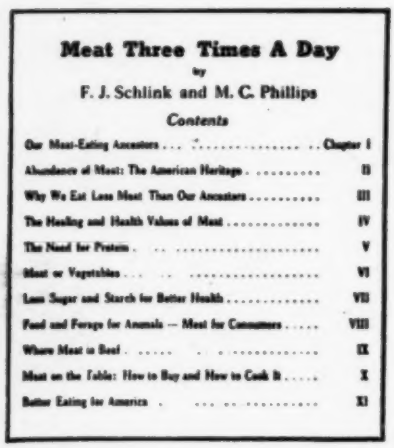
It's a good old custom, Miss Brown!

. . . Chosen "Miss Greater Philadelphia" Wednesday, Ginny Brown, 18, declared, "I didn't think I had a chance to win so I ate two steaks just before the judging began." She will go to the Miss America contest at Atlantic City, N.J.

—*Des Moines Tribune*,
Aug. 15, 1946

THERE was a time when this might have been considered quite the normal thing to do. As MEAT THREE TIMES A DAY points out (on p. 143) a recommended beauty training diet for young ladies in 1824 included a breakfast of plain biscuit and broiled beefsteaks (note the plural) or mutton chops.

WE don't go so far as to suggest that you too can place in a Miss America contest by reading and following the advice in this book, but we're sure that it will make your mouth water and you'll want to rush right out and get a steak or a hamburger, with benefit to your sense of well-being —and perhaps your health also.



Meat Three Times A Day

by

F. J. Schlink and M. C. Phillips

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"Meat three times a day? Well, why not? Here, with a rich marshaling of material, is the gist of the case for the world's meat eaters . . . . . Here's to Schlink and Phillips, the bringers of light, and to a thick, juicy steak under every broiler."

—Stanley Walker
N. Y. Herald Tribune

"A lot of thought, for example, went into the writing of Meat Three Times a Day, and a lot of additional controversy has come out of it. Vegetarians bristled at its title and criticized its claims, chief among which was that the United States wants and needs more chops and steaks, more liver and game and lean pork."

—The Philadelphia Inquirer

"The old menus they have resurrected are something to make a mouth water and to sigh for a return of the days when one might follow a venison steak with a dozen stewed oysters, in the best hotel in town, for a total cost of 75 cents."

—N. Y. Sun

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